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GIFT OF
M. G. Luck

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Atlantic Texts

ESSAYS AND ESSAY-WRITING

Based on Atlantic Monthly Models

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION
AND NOTES BY

WILLIAM M. TANNER, M.A.
The University of Texas

The Atlantic Monthly Press
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GIFT OF M. G. LUCK

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PREFACE

THE favor with which *Atlantic Classics* is being received has encouraged the publication of this the second collection of *Atlantic* essays. The present volume differs materially, however, from *Atlantic Classics* in that it is made up almost entirely of short, familiar essays published anonymously in the 'Contributors' Club' of the *Atlantic*, and is specially edited for the use of students. Because of the anonymity of the author in most cases, choice has been governed solely by the individual merit of each selection. An attempt has been made to include those essays that possess general and permanent human interest. The collection represents a rather wide range and variety of subjects. The average length of the essays chosen is about one thousand words. Proper limitation of the number to be included has been the most difficult part of the editor's task, for a great many essays have been omitted only because of lack of space.

In the preparation of this volume, both the student and the general reader have been kept in mind. In the introductory section and in the brief prefaces to the five type-groups, an effort has been made to render the study of the familiar essay a matter of pleasure and profit to the reader. It is hoped, furthermore, that these discussions may prove helpful to students who attempt the writing of familiar essays.

To the anonymous *Atlantic* contributors who have furnished enjoyment to thousands of readers during the past forty years' existence of the 'Contributors'

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Club,' and who have made this volume possible, the editor gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness. They have supplied, out of the fabric of their lives, the material that composes this collection of intimate human documents. For the many happy hours spent with the members of the 'Contributors' Club,' the editor would express his appreciation by this endeavor to introduce to a still larger reading public a few of these delightful familiar essays. To the editorial staff of the *Atlantic* the editor wishes to express his sincere thanks for valuable counsel and thorough coöperation.

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INTRODUCTION

I. THE ESSAY AS A LITERARY FORM

In every discussion of the various forms of literature that are designated essays, the question arises, first or last, What is an essay? It would seem that, in this the fourth century since the creation of the essay, the term in its exact significance would be well understood and clearly defined. Such, however, is not the case. Since Montaigne, in 1580, first modestly called his short, informal prose compositions *Essais*, the word *essay* has been made to include an ever-increasing variety of literary forms. Because of this wide application and loose use, the term has become somewhat vague in meaning, with rather ill-defined limitations. It is indeed difficult to frame one definition of the essay that will include such a variety of short prose compositions as those of Montaigne, Bacon, Addison, Macaulay, Lamb, De Quincey, Ruskin, and Stevenson. In the popular, general sense in which the term is used it includes all short expositions. Though Pope wrote metrical compositions which he called essays (*Essay on Man* and *Essay on Criticism*), and Locke an extensive prose treatise entitled *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, these are usually regarded as being too much at variance with the general type properly to be called essays. In this discussion the term will be limited to include only relatively short prose compositions.

In spite of the fact that no very exact definition of

the essay can be given, it may be profitable just here to consider a few of the recognized meanings and some of the definitions that have been proposed. In the literary sense in which Montaigne, the first user of the term, employed it, the word meant literally 'a trial, attempt, or endeavor.' To his mind it seems to have represented the trial, or *assay*, of his subject. Tentativeness, incompleteness, and lack of elaboration and literary finish were felt by the inventor to be characteristic of this new literary genre. Doctor Johnson has retained this idea of incompleteness in his dictionary definition of the word: 'A loose sally of the mind; an irregular, undigested piece; not a regular and orderly performance,' he states. According to a modern definition, given in the *New English Dictionary*, an essay is 'a composition of moderate length on any particular subject, or branch of a subject; originally implying want of finish, "an irregular, undigested piece," but now said of a composition more or less elaborate in style, though limited in range.' It will be noticed, as indicated in this definition, that in the development of the essay tentativeness and incompleteness have in large measure given place to something of completeness and artistic unity, as well as literary finish, though, of course, the essay, because of its space limitations, does not pretend to the elaborate completeness of the longer treatise or dissertation. The same limitations distinguish, in one respect, the short story from the novel as forms of prose fiction. In addition to these definitions, Mr. Edmund Gosse, in his article on the essay in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, proposed the following: 'As a form of literature, the essay is a composition of moderate length, usually in prose, which deals in an easy, cursory way with the

external conditions of a subject, and, in strictness, with that subject only as it affects the writer.' In this definition, naturalness and ease in style and the personality of the author are additional characteristics of the essay. Since the essayist deals with his subject primarily as it affects *him*, he allows the reader to look at the subject through his temperament and personality. Throughout the entire history of the essay, personality has been a most important characteristic.

In order to supplement these definitions, a brief synopsis showing the origin and the development of the essay during the three centuries of its history is given in the section that follows. It includes merely a summary of the principal characteristics of the essay in each century and an enumeration of some of the influences responsible for its particular character in each period. From the time of Montaigne and Bacon to the present, the essay has developed along two lines: the formal essay and the informal, or familiar, essay. In this brief outline, though the development along both lines will be indicated, chief attention will be devoted to the progress and development of the familiar essay, the type that more truly represents the genuine essay-nature as conceived by Montaigne.

II. THE ORIGIN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH ESSAY

Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592), a retired lawyer, who, in addition to 'living in quiet and reading,' became interested in writing about himself, his personal opinions and affairs, is usually referred to as the father of the modern prose essay, and 1580 is the accepted birth-year of this new literary genre. In that

year Montaigne published the first two volumes of his *Essais*. Though there are some rather conservative persons who agree with Bacon in saying of the French author's use of the word *essay*, 'The word is late, though the thing is ancient,' and who, not being inclined to give Montaigne the credit for actually inventing this new prose type, call attention to various 'short dissertations' and 'brief treatises,' such as the *Book of Ecclesiastes*, Theophrastus's *Characters*, Cicero's *De Senectute* and *De Amicitia*, Caxton's *Prefaces*, Chaucer's *Tale of Melibeus*, and various short prose compositions of the earlier Elizabethan period, — all antedating the *Essais*, — there is virtual agreement in according Montaigne the honor of having named this new prose form and of having clearly illustrated it by his own writing. In the nineteenth century, Edgar Allan Poe, it will be recalled, performed a similar service in defining and illustrating the short story. In the hands of Montaigne the essay became a well-defined literary organ of personality. He very early turned aside from the compilation of moral dissertations and the impersonal style of writing then in vogue and began to write of himself and his affairs in an easy, colloquial style. This revolt of Montaigne's and the style of writing that he developed is responsible for the birth of the personal essay. In speaking of Montaigne, William Hazlitt, a nineteenth-century English essayist who most resembled him in his mastery of the familiar essay, and who fully appreciated the character and quality of the French essayist's contribution to literature, said of him: 'His greatest merit was that he may be said to have been the first who had the courage to say as an author what he felt as a man; and as courage is generally the effect of conscious strength,

he was, probably, led to do so by the richness, truth, and force of his own observations on books and men. He was, in the truest sense, a man of original mind; that is, he had the power of looking at things for himself, or as they really were, instead of blindly trusting to, and fondly repeating, what others told him that they were. . . . He was, in a word, the first author who was not a book-maker, and who wrote, not to make converts of others to established creeds and prejudices, but to satisfy his own mind of the truth of things. In this respect we know not which to be most charmed with, the author or the man.' Of himself Montaigne wrote: 'I study myself more than any other subject. This is my metaphysic; this my natural philosophy.' 'We converse with Montaigne, or rather hear him talk,' says Hallam; 'it is almost impossible to read his Essays without thinking that he speaks to us; we see his cheerful brow, his sparkling eye, his negligent, but gentlemanly demeanor; we picture him in his arm-chair, with his few books round the room, and Plutarch on the table.' Personality and an easy, natural, desultory style are the distinct contributions of Montaigne to the essay.

In 1597, during the latter part of the Elizabethan period in literature, the essay made its appearance in England. In this year Bacon published in a slender volume ten short aphoristic essays. These essays are best characterized, in the words used by their author in referring to them, as 'brief notes set down significantly' and as 'dispersed meditations.' In tone they very closely resemble other moral treatises of Bacon's period; brevity and conciseness were their chief distinguishing characteristics. In these first ten essays there is scarcely any evidence of the writer's person-

ality. In his later essays, published in 1612 and 1625, the personal note is slightly discernible, though the English essayist never attained to the high degree of personal expression achieved by Montaigne. In 1603, the latter's *Essais* were made accessible to English readers by John Florio's translation, but Bacon had earlier become familiar with them in their original version. Though the English essayist's style became noticeably less formal, he never acquired the ease, the grace, and the charming discursiveness so pleasing in Montaigne.

The seventeenth century was the experimental period of essay-writing in England. Although several writers, working within rather restricted limits, attempted the new form, few achieved any degree of eminence. Most essayists took Montaigne and Bacon as their models. Of these, Abraham Cowley (1618–1667), whose eleven essays were published in 1668 under the title *Several Discourses, by Way of Essays, in Verse and Prose*, and Sir William Temple (1628–1699), whose essays were published in three volumes entitled *Miscellanea*, are the most worthy of note. The *Religio Medici* of Sir Thomas Browne (1605–1682), because of the decided personal note and the admirable prose style in which it is written, entitles its author to a prominent place among early English essayists. Of all seventeenth-century essayists, Cowley most nearly approached the familiar essay of Montaigne. Besides these personal essayists, there were such character-writers as John Earle (1601?–1665), famous for his *Microcosmography*, a collection of interesting character-essays, written under the influence of Theophrastus's *Characters* and Ben Jonson's comedies of humors, and the more original Thomas Fuller (1608–1661),

who is well known for his 'characters' in *The Holy and Profane State.*

Briefly summarized, the essay of the seventeenth century may be said to include the personal essay of the type of Montaigne, character-essays, and the critical literary essays of John Dryden (1631–1700). The essayists of this period found their chief interest centred in moral and ethical themes, but they treated their themes from the point of view of the individual rather than from that of society. The influence of Greek and Latin literature may be seen in the frequent allusions and references to the ancient poets, philosophers, and historians, and in the copious sprinkling of classical quotations by way of illustrative and decorative material. Though there were slight indications of a tendency to break away from the earlier models and the restrictions of the formal treatise, no great change in this respect took place before the beginning of the next century. Personality in the treatment of a theme and naturalness of expression were, however, two characteristics of the familiar essay cultivated and fairly well established during the seventeenth century.

The essay of the eighteenth century differed widely in many respects from the essay of the preceding century. Most noticeable among these differences was the change in the theme and in the attitude of the essayist. Not individual morality and self-revelation, but politics, society and social institutions, manners, and customs constituted the essayist's chief interest. With the establishment of the new periodical essay by Steele and Addison, there was a very distinct breaking away from the classics and the earlier models in French and in English literature. The result was the produc-

tion of a new and original type. The essay of the eighteenth century was, in many respects, an analysis and criticism of contemporary political and social life. Greater freedom of the press gave birth to and fostered many periodical publications that achieved greater or less success during the century. More than two hundred somewhat ephemeral publications appeared between 1700 and 1800. But the influence of these short-lived periodicals on the social life and the literature of the time can hardly be overestimated. By means of the periodical essay, such writers as Steele, Addison, Chesterfield, Johnson, and Goldsmith sought to reform and educate society by popularizing morality and knowledge. For this reason, the essay became markedly didactic and social in character, and hence less personal than formerly. The influence of the coffee-houses and the clubs in encouraging social and political discussions was plainly to be seen in the development of a more natural, sprightly, conversational style in writing. Though the essay of this period was still influenced to some extent by the earlier character-essays, the epistle, and visions and allegories of mediæval and classical literature, it was to a greater extent a new and original type. But in addition to the political and social periodical essays proper, there appeared other types, like moral discourses, character-essays, and critical literary essays and reviews, like those of Johnson and Goldsmith.

With the beginning of the nineteenth century there came still another great change in the nature and character of the essay. The essay of the seventeenth century, it will be recalled, was personal, moral, and reflective; that of the eighteenth was social, didactic,

and critical in character. The essay of the nineteenth century included both the other types, which were greatly expanded and very highly perfected by the essayists of this period. A fair balance between the formal and the informal, or familiar, essay was maintained throughout the century. Greater range and variety of subject, greater length, and greater literary finish, as compared with the essay of the two centuries preceding, were noticeable characteristics of the new essay. Furthermore, there was evidence of greater individuality in thought and directness in style. The essays were less didactic, and many of the familiar essayists were more personal and pleasingly egotistical than their predecessors had dared to be. Chief among the influences that brought about these changes were the growth of individualism in all realms of thought; the establishment of modern literary magazines, such as the *Edinburgh Review* (1802), the *Quarterly Review* (1809), *Blackwood's Magazine* (1817), and the *London Magazine* (1820),—all of which gave great encouragement and rather liberal financial remuneration to reviewers and critical essayists as well as to writers of the familiar essay; and lastly, the revival of interest in Montaigne's *Essais*. (In 1685 Charles Cotton had made a translation of the *Essais* which in large measure superseded Florio's translation of 1603. During the nineteenth century, Hazlitt made a revision of Cotton's translation, and thus enhanced the French essayist's popularity to an even greater degree.) Prominent among formal essayists of the last century may be mentioned such reviewers as Francis Jeffrey (1773–1850), Robert Southey (1774–1843), and S. T. Coleridge (1772–1834); such literary critics as Macaulay (1800–1859), Carlyle (1795–

1881), Matthew Arnold (1822–1888), and Pater (1839–1894); such biographical and historical essayists as Macaulay, Carlyle, and Bagehot (1826–1877); such sociological lecture-essayists as Ruskin (1819–1900) and Matthew Arnold; such scientific lecture-essayists as Thomas Huxley (1825–1895); and such philosophical essayists as Carlyle and Emerson (1803–1882) in America. The familiar essay is well represented by such masters and worthy disciples of Montaigne as Lamb (1775–1834), William Hazlitt (1778–1830), Leigh Hunt (1784–1859), John Wilson ('Christopher North') (1785–1854), De Quincey (1785–1859), Thackeray (1811–1863), and Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894). In the familiar essay of the nineteenth century at least four American essayists have attained to eminence; these are Irving (1783–1859), George William Curtis (1824–1892), Holmes (1809–1894), and Donald Grant Mitchell (1822–1908).

It is somewhat difficult to characterize and pass judgment upon the contemporary essay of England and America. There seems to be still a fair balance preserved between the formal and the informal, or familiar, types, though at present there appears to be a falling off in the popularity of the 'pure' literary and more serious contemplative and speculative essay of a quarter-century ago. To a considerable extent the so-called 'special article' of the magazines is supplanting the 'pure' essay. The familiar essay, however, appears to be holding its own in the better class of magazines, and is competing successfully with the short story in the case of those thoughtful, leisurely readers who are willing to take time to think and to live.

Though many persons maintain that Stevenson was the last great name among English familiar essayists, and that Emerson is the only essayist that America has produced, there are, nevertheless, several men and women writing in both England and America who are doing creditable work in upholding the standards set by those whom we are accustomed to regard as essayists of the first rank. Among contemporary English essayists of note are A. C. Benson, John Galsworthy, G. K. Chesterton, E. V. Lucas, Hilaire Belloc, and Alice Meynell. In America, John Burroughs, Agnes Repplier, Samuel McChord Crothers, Robert Haven Schauffler, Simeon Strunsky, and Katherine Fullerton Gerould are familiar essayists worthy of mention.

III. THE FAMILIAR ESSAY

The familiar essay may be thought of as a composite fabric delicately woven upon a slight framework called the theme or unifying idea. The pattern is of the essayist's own devising. The texture and the quality of the resulting fabric depend upon his personality, his attitude toward his subject, and his skill in weaving — that is, his style of expression. The familiar essay in prose and the lyric in poetry are alike essentially literary organs of personality. In discussing the nature and the character of these two forms of literature, it is well-nigh impossible to consider separately the subject, the author, and the style. The familiar essay is most effectively defined by pointing out the interrelation of these three elements.

In an article entitled 'On Essays at Large,' Mr. A. C. Benson, perhaps the foremost of contemporary English essayists, thus defines this type of the essay:

'The true essay, then, is a tentative and personal treatment of a subject; it is a kind of improvisation on a delicate theme; a species of soliloquy, as if a man were to speak aloud the slender and whimsical thoughts that come into his mind when he is alone on a winter evening before a warm fire, and, closing his book, abandons himself to the luxury of genial reverie. . . . The theme itself matters little — the art of it lies in the treatment. And the important thing is that the essay should possess what may be called atmosphere and personality; and thus it may be held to be of the essence of the matter that the result should appear to be natural, by whatever expenditure of toil that quality may need to be achieved. . . . The mark of the true essay is that the reader's thinking is all done for him. A thought is expanded in a dozen ways, until the most nebulous mind takes cognizance of it. The path winds and insinuates itself, like a little leafy lane among fields, with the hamlet-chimneys and the spire, which are its leisurely goal, appearing only by glimpses and vistas, just sufficiently to reassure the sauntering pilgrim as to the ultimate end of his enterprise.' It will be noticed that, in addition to mentioning treatment and personality, the writer has included naturalness, clearness, and discursiveness as other qualities of the familiar essay.

The relation between the mood of the essayist and the subject that he may select is well indicated by Alexander Smith (1830–1867), the author of a collection of essays called *Dreamthorp*, in his article entitled 'On the Writing of Essays.' He says: 'The essay, as a literary form, resembles the lyric, in so far as it is moulded by some central mood — whimsical, serious, or satirical. Give the mood, and the

essay, from the first sentence to the last, grows around it as the cocoon grows around the silkworm. The essay-writer is a chartered libertine, and a law unto himself. A quick ear and eye, an ability to discern the infinite suggestiveness of common things, a brooding meditative spirit, are all that the essayist requires to start business with. . . . The essayist is a kind of poet in prose, and if questioned harshly as to his uses, he might be unable to render a better apology for his existence than a flower might. . . . The essayist plays with his subject, now whimsical, now in grave, now in melancholy mood. He lies upon the idle grassy bank, like Jacques, letting the world flow past him, and from this thing and the other he extracts his mirth and his moralities. His main gift is an eye to discover the suggestiveness of common things; to find a sermon in the most unpromising texts. Beyond the vital hint, the first step, his discourses are not beholden to their titles. Let him take up the most trivial subject, and it will lead him away to the great questions over which the serious imagination loves to brood, — fortune, mutability, death, — just as inevitably as the runnel, trickling among the summer hills, on which sheep are bleating, leads you to the sea; or as, turning down the first street you come to in the city, you are led finally, albeit by many an intricacy, out into the open country, with its waste places and its woods, where you are lost in a sense of strangeness and solitariness. The world is to the meditative man what the mulberry plant is to the silkworm. The essay-writer has no lack of subject-matter. He has the day that is passing over his head; and, if unsatisfied with that, he has the world's six thousand years to depasture his gay or serious humor upon.'

IV. FIVE GENERAL TYPES OF THE FAMILIAR ESSAY

For the convenience of the reader, an attempt has been made in the present volume to classify the essays selected into five rather general types. This classification has been made primarily on the basis of subject-matter and the mood of the essayist. Between some of the types there is no very sharp line of demarcation. Some essays that are classified under one type may seem to possess characteristics suggesting a resemblance to some other type. Though the classification is somewhat loose and general, it has been thought worth while. Since these types are discussed in the prefaces to their respective sections in the text, nothing more than an enumeration is included here.

Essays of Type I: Personal Experiences, Confessions, and Self-Analyses.

Essays of Type II: Reflections and Comments on Life, Human Nature, Customs, and Experience.

Essays of Type III: Observations and Discoveries in the Familiar and Commonplace.

Essays of Type IV: Nature Essays.

Essays of Type V: General Observations, Comments, and Opinions of the Author.

V. SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDYING THE FAMILIAR ESSAY

The essay, though essentially expository in nature, is rarely pure exposition. It usually includes a combination of exposition with one or more of the other forms of discourse. In such familiar essays as Lamb's

'Dream-Children,' and 'The Saturday-Night Bath,' 'Endicott and I Conduct an Orchestra,' and 'Jonas and Matilda,'—the last three selections are found in this volume,—the narrative element may seem to predominate; but in essays of this kind it will usually be found that narration really contributes by way of illustration to the essay that is impliedly, at least, expository. Narration and description, frequently argument, contribute a considerable share to the essay.

In almost every familiar essay, no matter how short or informally written, there is stated at the beginning or early in the essay some general thesis or central idea that the author uses as the test of his comments. This central idea is the most effective means of giving the essay unity. After setting forth his thesis, which often consists of an abstract statement, the writer usually proceeds to develop this central idea by the introduction of concrete details and appropriate references. His personal experience and observation, together with well-chosen historical and literary allusions, furnish him the necessary illustrative material.

The beginning of the essay is, from the reader's and from the writer's point of view, very important. Unless the essay begins in an attractive fashion, few persons will be sufficiently interested to read beyond the first paragraph. Directness in beginning, clear, short, crisp sentences, a smooth, conversational style, and fair originality in thought—not necessarily a striking paradox, such as Mr. Chesterton is fond of using as an initial statement—will do much to give the essay a favorable introduction to the reader. Besides studying the beginnings of the essays included in this volume, examine the opening paragraphs and the first few

sentences in such essays as Hazlitt's 'The Feeling of Immortality in Youth' and 'On Going a Journey'; Lamb's 'The Two Races of Men' and 'Poor Relations'; and Stevenson's 'Walking Tours,' 'Talk and Talkers,' and 'El Dorado.'

In addition to the general comments just given, the following more direct suggestions and questions may be found helpful in the study of the familiar essay:—

1. After you have read the essay through carefully, try to determine exactly what is the thesis (the central, unifying idea) that the writer has made the basis of his essay. State this thesis in one sentence, if possible.

2. Try to discover the method that the author has used in developing and amplifying this central idea; note the use of concrete details, illustrations drawn from experience and observation, and literary and historical allusions.

3. Is the essay wholly expository? If not, to what extent have the other forms of discourse been combined with exposition? Is the essay largely narration and description, with only a slight suggestion or implication of exposition? What justification have you for calling such a composition a familiar essay?

4. Consider the subject-matter of the essay; then notice the effect that the writer's personality, his mood, and his treatment of the subject have in making the essay readable and interesting. To what extent and by what means has the essayist given the reader an insight into his personality? Is the subject inherently interesting, or has it been made interesting principally through the writer's rather original, personal treatment of it?

5. Try to analyze the style of the essayist. What

virtues does it possess? What limitations? Is the style well adapted to the subject and the author's mood? Is the style your chief interest in the essay? Will some of the following adjectives characterize the writer's style: easy, flowing, rhythmic, melodious, graceful, picturesque, transparent, graphic, direct, forceful, clear, epigrammatic, intense, eloquent, polished, abrupt, rugged, cautious, tame, restrained, trite, flat, wordy? Read the essay aloud as a test of the naturalness of expression and the conversational quality of style.

6. Notice the paragraphs and the sentences. Are they long or short? Well constructed? Effective in their particular context? Is there anything distinctive about the essayist's choice of words? Does his diction add to the effectiveness and interest of the essay?

7. Make free and regular use of the dictionary and books of reference as an aid to study. The meaning and connotation of words and the appropriateness of historical, literary, musical, and other allusions are very important in establishing a sympathetic understanding between the essayist and the reader.

8. Read as widely as possible in standard literature. In the reading of essays in particular, try to develop a feeling for what constitutes the particular characteristics of this type of prose literature. No amount of definition and abstract discussion of the essay can take the place of actual personal acquaintance with the essays themselves. Cultivate or acquire the faculty of being mentally alert. Be susceptible to impressions, and see how greatly such an attitude adds to the pleasure of living, how much you are able to discover about yourself. Let yourself grow mentally through practice in the expression of your own intimate thoughts.

TYPE I

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES, CONFESSIONS, AND SELF-ANALYSES

This book has a domestic and private object. It is intended for the use of my relations and friends; so that, when they have lost me, which they will soon do, they may find in it some features of my condition and humours; and by this means keep up more completely, and in a more lively manner, the knowledge they have of me. . . . It is myself I portray. (Adapted from Montaigne's preface to his *Essais*.)

A modest, truthful man speaks better about himself than about anything else, and on that subject his speech is likely to be most profitable to his hearers. Certainly, there is no subject with which he is better acquainted, and on which he has a better title to be heard. And it is this egotism, this perpetual reference to self, in which the charm of the essayist resides. If a man is worth knowing at all, he is worth knowing well. The essayist gives you his thoughts, and lets you know, in addition, how he came by them. He has nothing to conceal; he throws open his doors and windows, and lets him enter who will. (Alexander Smith, *On the Writing of Essays*.)

THE three most interesting and universal subjects of conversation, as Stevenson observed, are, in the order of their interest and universality, 'I am I,' 'You are you,' and 'There are other people dimly understood to be not quite the same as either.' That is to say, the greater portion of conversation concerns itself with each speaker's self, his family, friends, and acquaintances, and other people more remote who possess only a vague, potential social interest for the speaker and his hearer. To paraphrase Pope, the most interesting study of mankind is man. This universal kinship of interest assures each person whose talk is of himself, or even of other people, of an interested listener. Whatever relates to a man, his life and experience,

his thoughts, desires, and dreams, will interest other men. The more personal and intimate the speaker makes his comments and confessions, the more interest there is inherent for the reader. Though man may never know himself fully and satisfactorily, and though he can never communicate to others all that is in his mind to say about even himself and his experiences and observations in living, he is constantly endeavoring to understand himself better and to entertain others with the interesting 'Tale of Me.'

The entertaining conversationalist and the familiar essayist are very closely akin, for each is essentially a graceful, pleasing talker. The essayist's manner of expression is markedly conversational. When he is personal, informal, and easy, he is most interesting. In writing, he attempts to be as free and unaffected as he is in speaking with his intimate friend. Discursiveness and whimsical digressions are almost as frequent in the familiar essay as in good conversation.

Though the essayist is free to choose any subject suggested by a multitude of human interests and experiences, he most naturally selects those subjects that possess the strongest personal appeal. He may talk of his family, of his friends, of his more formal associates, of his acquaintances in general, or of other people still more remote from his interests; but of himself he talks with greater zest and readiness, for his own self and experiences furnish him the best material for his reflections and intimate musings. By self-observation he can study closely and analyze his own reactions to life and the readjustments that have come in the course of living, in a manner not possible when other persons, the objective world, and social relations are his subjects.

Varying moods bring corresponding changes in the

personality, particular interest, and attitude of the familiar essayist. For this reason, his mood will usually suggest to the writer that aspect of himself which he shall present in his personal comments. In writing about himself, he may assume a serious or semi-serious attitude; but more frequently he deals with his subject in a humorous, mock-serious, or even playful, manner, such as Lamb usually adopted in his quaint personal gossip. Ideally, there is no appearance of boasting or unbecoming self-praise in even the most personal familiar essays. The attitude of the author toward his subject and his humorous treatment of it may, however, permit him to be pleasingly egotistical; but he smiles as frequently at his blunders and inconsistencies as he does at his unsuspected cleverness and the wisdom that he has acquired in living.

By his attitude of geniality the essayist invites the reader to share his thoughts, personal observations, and impressions. When he gives the reader tacitly to understand that, 'since "you are you," my friend and intelligent fellow-mortal, I have chosen you as one with whom I desire to share my reflections,' he assures himself of an interested, sympathetic reader. Because of this bond of sympathetic understanding, this personal relationship between two minds, the reader enjoys the author's self-revelation, and not infrequently is highly pleased to discover many points of kinship between himself and the essayist. Such discoveries constitute one of the keenest pleasures of reading the familiar essay. They are the particular charm of the personal essay. Recognizing one's own characteristics in others and happening upon statements and echoes of one's own thoughts in the writings of another furnish the principal enjoyment in all essay reading.

Among the interesting personal subjects that suggest themselves to the familiar essayist, a recent, vivid individual experience may please his fancy most. He may record some interesting objective encounter or some mental experience in dreams or during illness and convalescence. His essay may be primarily an account of the incident, accompanied by a brief comment on the interest and the significance of the happening. At another time and under the influence of a different mood, he may confide to the reader what experience in living has taught him about himself. He may enter freely into a confidential analysis of his personality, temperament, moral ideas, religious beliefs, or philosophy of life. Again, should he be so inclined, his comments may be a confession, serious or whimsical, regarding his likes and dislikes, virtues and shortcomings, superstitions, self-deceptions, or other personal peculiarities. In a mood of reverie, he may share with the reader his enthusiasms, past and present, his day-dreams, pleasing fantasies, outgrown opinions and prejudices, and jealously-treasured memories. In a gayer, more talkative humor, he may entertain the reader with an exposition of some pet fad or cherished whim, may enumerate his hobbies or defend one of his caprices or Bohemian ideas. Furthermore, he may write a defense of an unpopular or conventionally-disapproved custom, or an apology for an ill-favored class, in which he has usually included himself. (Stevenson's 'An Apology for Idlers' is, by the author's own statement in a letter to a friend, 'really a defense of R. L. S.') In a moment of revolt he may inveigh against a custom or a convention which, he feels, cramps or restricts him in the exercise of what he considers his personal liberty or freedom of speech.

All these and many other aspects of the author's individuality and experience may furnish appropriate subject-matter for this the most personal type of the familiar essay.

TYMPANO

As a boy I was fascinated by the orchestral kettle-drummer. We dare confess as weaknesses of childhood oddities which would stamp us, grown men and women, as decidedly queer. I shall not confess that as a man I am still fascinated by the kettle-drum of the orchestra. It is easier to ask you whether, on your honor, the little bald-headed man behind his battery of polished mortars from which he dauntlessly fires single booming shells and rattling showers of grape has not helped you to pass more than one musical evening without disgracing yourself by falling asleep. If you do not care to commit yourself, at least own that you too have been amused and interested in watching his flying sticks and his bobbing head; for unless you are an admirer of Tympano, these reminiscences will mean nothing to you.

The important observation has been made that the blowers of wind-instruments are invariably bald or baldescent, while the sawyers of strings are adorned with locks to make a Delilah's fingers itch. Clarinet, oboe, horn, trombone, tuba, and bassoon have blown each other's heads as bare as sirocco and simoom the plains of Africa. But of all bald heads, Tympano's is the baldest. His radiant sconce beams out in the musical storm like the moon amid broken clouds, and, I have no doubt, gives as much confidence to the navigators of the musical sea. He is never at a loss. He glares at the score. His uncompromising attitude shows you that he, at any rate, knows what it is all

about. How admirable is his self-possession as he screws up his diaphragms, taps them gently, caressingly, with critical ear inclined, and allays their throbbings with unfevered palm. (And all this amid an avalanche of sound, like a man artistically tying his necktie while sliding down the Jungfrau.) How wonderful is his ability to keep one eye fixed on his score and the other on the leader, ever ready to insert, jauntily or circumspectly or decisively, into the theme his punctuation of stops, dashes, and exclamation-points; yet also ready at any moment to set his sticks flying till they hover over the agitated surfaces of his drums, an indistinguishable cloud, out of which rise ominous mutterings of mobs, rumblings of thunder, roar of surf, bellowings of all the bulls of Bashan. Tremendous tumult to be the offspring of a tempest, — not, it is true, in a teapot, but in a soup-kettle!

Never shall I forget the thrill that danced up and down my spine the first time I heard Grieg's *Peer Gynt* suite played by a great orchestra. The elfin music of Anitra's dance was done; the funereal dirge of Ase had died into silence like the groanings of Hamlet senior having his sins burned and purged away. Then Tympano arose and girded his loins for battle. He tested the knobs of his sticks, he turned his screws, he patted his sheepskins and 'over them softly his warm ear laid.' All was right and tight as a cruiser in fighting trim. He bent forward, alert and ready, but majestically calm.

The Mountain King's ball began. The wild orgy rose and swelled. Winds howled in gorges, pines whistled and screamed, demons laughed, the sea moaned in far fiords. Superhuman buzzings sounded from the bass viols, demoniac chords from the 'cellos,

shrieks of pain from the clarinets and oboes, defiant challenges from the horns, piteous complainings from the bassoons. On and on, up and up, swept the tides of sound, but Tympano stood unmoved. Higher and nearer, till they threatened to engulf him, but he quivered not an eyelid. I had given him up for lost, but suddenly at a nod from the leader he came to life, he let loose his thunders, he roared his defiance. Low and uncertain at first he rumbled, but waxed in volume until, little man that he was, he all but drowned his toiling, sweating comrades in a long-drawn rattling peal that shook the seat whereon I sat and turned my blood to water within me.

I dreamed of Tympano that night. I saw him riding the wind, a new Hermes with a drumstick for a caduceus.

This exploit of Tympano's took place in my twelfth year, and for a long time he occupied a niche of honor in my mental gallery of heroes as the most redoubtable of drum-drubbers. Of course, I realized that I would rather listen to the orchestra without him than to him without the orchestra, yet I felt that the Mountain King's ball would be a poor affair without him, like a thunder-storm without any thunder.

Perhaps a year later I discovered his soul-brother. It was at a seaside resort, and along the board-walk came marching a band of Highland bagpipers in full costume. They were tremendous fellows, but their music, to my untutored ears, was like the squealings of forty stuck pigs. Yet I have never heard strains to compare with theirs for arousing a desire to die for one's country.

I think the bagpipe music must have been fashioned

back in the old days by some demon of perversity out of the whistle of arrows, the clash of claymores, the neighing of war-steeds, and the shrieks of the dying. When I hear it, I think of the wheel of fortune, the car of Juggernaut, the mills of the gods, and the inquisitorial rack and screw. It whirls along with a cyclonic rhythm that sets the feet to tramping and the blood to boiling.

> And such a yell was there,
> Of sudden and portentous birth,
> As if men fought upon the earth,
> And fiends in upper air:
> Oh, life and death were in the shout,
> Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
> And triumph and despair.

This particular band of six-foot Roderick Dhus came swinging along with the precision of a machine, twelve elbows and twelve legs moving as one, six grave faces set resolutely to the front, chins held high, fingers flying, bonnets and plaids flashing, plumes waving. With the same jaunty gravity they would have led a wedding procession or a forlorn hope, and not missed a whistle or a squeak. I felt extremely small as they went by, but was all eyes. For behind them strode the most prodigious figure I had ever seen.

He was seven feet tall if he was an inch, and resting on his wish-bone was the biggest bass-drum seen on earth since Tubal smote the chorded shell. Yet this astonishing man not only carried it with ease, but smote it with a vivacity and vigor which even Tympano could not outdo. And, what is more, he buffeted it on both sides, for he wielded a drumstick in each hand, and not only displayed all Tympano's precision, but managed to execute the most marvelous evolutions

between whacks, brandishing his sticks alternately behind his head, hitting the left side of the drum with his right-hand stick, and vice versa, throwing the sticks into the air and catching them again in the nick of time; and all this with a high devotion and a heroic joy that made me catch my breath and grit my teeth to keep from shouting aloud in ecstasy. Never have I seen a man so extremely busy who made so light of business.

The wailing chorus with its thunderous accompaniment swept on and away. The musicians were employed only by a traveling show; they had sunk low from a high estate; yet for one boy they were a bit of old-world pageantry, an episode in high romance which illuminated the pages of Scottish history for many a day.

My Scotchman could have tucked Tympano in the nook of his plaid, yet I cannot help feeling that they were of the same stuff at heart. Just what makes a man take to playing a drum, — snare, kettle, or bass, — in preference to more dulcet instruments, it would be hard to say. It is the music of unadulterated rhythm, and the mysteries of our love of rhythm have occupied more than one keen mind. However, one does not have to possess the ear of a Disraeli — who is said to have preferred the Sultan's serenade of three hundred drums to Jenny Lind's singing — to feel that there is something to be said for the percussives.

I think that Tympano and the Scotchman are of an uncompromising, even dogmatic turn, that they suffer from no illusions, that for them two and two always make four. Of course, Tympano dwells on a loftier æsthetic level than the Scotchman; he knows music, and can usually play every instrument in the

orchestra a little; yet, like him, he sticks to his drums. They express his instinct for plain language, his desire to bring order out of chaos. As the Scotchman straightens out the spirals and involutions of his Gaelic pibrochs and coronachs, so Tympano, among the evasions and ambiguities and elusions of modern music, thumps and pounds and rumbles and roars, in much the same spirit as Doctor Johnson stamped on the ground in his argument with Bishop Berkeley. Rightly understood, they become a symbol. But moral applications have gone out of fashion.

THOUGHTS WHILE GETTING SETTLED

PROPERLY speaking, the new house was old. A hundred years and more had gone over its chimney, — down which, as we were to discover later, a hundred flies and more would come when the open fires had warmed it, — and within doors it would have charmed any amateur of the Colonial by the antiquity of its furnishings. Temporarily it belonged to me, my executors, administrators, and assigns. But there were limits to our possession. None of us might 'permit any hole to be drilled or made in the stone or brickwork of said building'; no 'sign or placard' might we place upon it; we might not 'over-load, damage, or deface' it; nor might we 'carry on any unlawful, improper, noisy, or offensive trade' in it. We had admitted that the glass was whole and in good order, and bound ourselves to keep it good, unless broken by fire, with glass of the same kind and quality. In case I became bankrupt I had agreed that the owner, the owner's executors, the owner's administrators, and the owner's assigns should treat me with every form

of ignominy that the law has yet invented to make bankruptcy more distressing. Nor could I hold them responsible if our guests fell down the cellar stairs; although there I think they would be morally responsible, for a steeper flight of cellar stairs I simply cannot imagine.

Of all documents there is hardly another so common as a lease, or more suspicious. Observe the lessor — a benevolent, dignified, but cautious person! Observe the lessee — a worm with criminal tendencies! Perhaps he is a decent sort of worm, but the lessor had better look out for him. Very likely he will commit murders in the dining-room, read the *Contes Drolatiques* in the library, play bass-drum solos in the parlor, and start a piggery in the cellar. One suspects that possibly the great army of hoboes is partly recruited from among supersensitive men who read their leases before signing them and preferred vagabondage to insult. But some of us control our sensitiveness. I, for example, read my lease; and when, having agreed mentally to post no placard myself, I discovered a clause allowing the lessor to decorate my residence with the information that it was

FOR SALE

I crossed that clause out!

Observe the worm turning!

It was the dining-room that had won us, formerly the kitchen and still complete, — with the brick oven; the crane; the fat, three-legged pots and spider; a thing that, after much debate, we think must have been a bread-toaster; and a kind of overgrown curry-comb with which, so we imagine, the original dwellers were wont to rake the hot ashes from the brick oven.

Also a warming-pan. And although these objects charm me, and I delight to live with them, I cannot but wonder whether a hundred years from now there may not be persons to furnish their dining-rooms with just such a stove as stands at present in my real kitchen; and perhaps to suspend beside it one of those quaint contraptions with which the jolly old chaps in the early twentieth century used to kill flies. I hear in imagination the host of that period explaining the implement to his wondering guests — being expert in such matters, he will produce the technical term 'swat' with an air of easy familiarity — and see him hang it reverently up again beside the dear old stove and right over the picturesque old coal-hod. Perhaps, too, he will point out the beautiful, sturdy lines of the coal-hod.

Now in due time, or, to be exact, some hours later, strong men came to this house with a motor truck; and, working with concentrated fury, they put into it all our own furniture, our trunks, our books, our clothes, and everything that was ours. It had been our purpose to direct these men: to say, 'This goes here, kind sirs,' and, 'That goes there, gentlemen'; or, 'Believe me, *this* is the place for *that*,' or, 'Thank you, sir, but *that* is the place for *this*.' When they had come and gone, and the empty truck had rumbled away in the early autumn twilight, everything was to be just where we had planned in advance; 'getting settled' would be a light but satisfying pleasure; organization, 'efficiency in business,' for we had been reading an article in a magazine, would have made changing our home as easy as changing our clothes. But these men were beyond mortal control. They came late and their mood was to depart early. Movers

always come late, for two reasons: first, because they like to feel that you are glad to see them, and, second, because they do not like to place each object just where it belongs. They prefer concentrated fury. Children of nature, they inherit their mother's abhorrence of a vacuum; unable, as they saw at a glance, to stuff the whole house from floors to ceilings, they devoted their attention, brushing us aside like annoying insects that they lacked time for killing, to stuffing such rooms as they instantly decided could be stuffed the tightest. If there was anything that we might presumably need at once, they put it at the bottom and buried it under the heaviest available furniture. It was wonderful to see them. In the end they actually took money for what they had done and went away hastily. Organization and 'efficiency in business' had accomplished something: the trunks were upstairs, and two barrels had reached their predestined place in the cellar.

There appears in many business offices, although it is not, so far as I know, the official slogan of 'efficiency in business,' a card with the motto, 'Do It Now.' I looked into that room which was destined to be the library: formerly it had been a bedroom, and the four-poster bed and noble mahogany bureau were to have vanished upstairs before my arrival. But now, peering past and above and under the débris that the avalanche had left there, I recognized the noble mahogany bureau in the far corner, mourning presumably for its departed companion, the four-poster. I beheld it with a misgiving which I tried to put from me, but which came back from moment to moment and whispered in whichever ear was nearer.

'Just suppose,' whispered Misgiving, 'that the man

who was hired to take that bureau upstairs found that it would n't go up ! ! ! ! '

And I thought of that stairway, that went up furtively from the dining-room that had once been the kitchen, a delightful stairway (especially when one realized what a discouraging time a burglar would have in finding it, and how he would probably find the cellar stairs instead and die of a broken neck at the bottom), but narrow, narrow; and with a right angle just where a right angle was least desirable. It had been as much as ever to get up the trunks.

'You will very likely have to leave the bureau in the library,' whispered Misgiving, 'and that will be inconvenient — won't it — when you have company. Company will have to dress in the library or else gather up its clothes and run.' — 'Library!' said Misgiving. 'Who ever heard of a bureau in a library? People will think the library table is a folding bed. You can't disguise a noble old bureau like that by putting books on it,' said Misgiving. 'Once a bureau always a bureau. — What will your wife say,' asked Misgiving, 'when she learns that the spare-room bureau *has* to stay downstairs in the library?'

People who, having something to do, 'do it now,' live in the present. I seized the nearest object, a chair, and dragged it into the next room; I seized the next object, a box, and carried it to the cellar; I risked my life on the cellar stairs; I became concentrated fury myself. In getting settled, whether you are a pioneer or a householder, the first thing is to make a clearing. No matter where things go, provided only that they go somewhere else. No matter what happened, no matter if bureaus remained for-

ever in libraries, no matter if the awful puzzle that the strong men of the moving van had left me remained forever insoluble — this was my home and I had to live in it for the term of one year. I took off my coat, hung it up somewhere — and found it again two days afterward. I attacked boxes, chairs, tables, boxes, books, bric-à-brac, more boxes, chairs, tables. I ran here and there, carrying things. I excelled the bee. I made a clearing, which grew larger and larger. I gained self-confidence. Elsewhere I knew that other hands were unpacking trunks; that another mind was directing those mysteries which out of chaos would evolve dinner; now and then, in my defying feat of going down cellar, I caught a glimpse of the furnace, — fat-bellied monster whom I must later feed like a coal-eating baby.

It is a question, parenthetically, whether it is truly sportsmanlike to live in a quaint old colonial cottage with a furnace and electric lights. I have heard amateurs of the Colonial declare that they would willingly die before they would live in an electrically lighted colonial cottage. The anachronism horrifies them: they would have death or candles. Probably they feel the same way about a furnace and a bathroom. Yet I have no doubt that the builders of this colonial cottage would have opened their hearts to all these inventions; and I am not sure that they would have regarded as anything but funny the idea that their own kitchen paraphernalia would some day be used to decorate my dining-room. I go further. Granting that electric lights, a furnace, and a bathroom are anachronisms in this quaint old colonial cottage — what am I but an anachronism myself? We must stand together, the furnace, the electric

metre, the porcelain bathtub, and I, and keep each other in countenance.

'H-m-m-m-m!' whispered Misgiving. '*How* about a bureau in the library? That is n't an anachronism; it 's an absurdity.'

Making a clearing is a long step forward in getting settled; after that it is a matter of days, a slow dawn of orderliness. In a quaint old colonial cottage are many closets, few if any of them located according to modern notions of convenience. The clothes closet that ought to be in the spare room upstairs is downstairs in the library with the spare-room bureau; the upstairs closets are under the eaves of the sloping roof — the way to utilize them to the best advantage is to enter on your hands and knees, carrying an electric torch between your teeth. Inside the closet you turn on your back, illuminate the pendent garments with your torch, drag whatever you select down from the hook, grasp it firmly with your teeth, and so out again on your hands and knees, rolling the electric torch gently before you. We see now why in those good old days chests of drawers were popular — fortunately we have one of our own that somehow has got up the stairway; and we see also, as we begin to settle into it, what is perhaps the secret of this humbler colonial architecture. The Colonial Jack who built this house wanted some rooms round a chimney and a roof that the snow would slide off; and so he built it; and wherever he found a space he made a closet or a cupboard; and because he had no other kind, he put in small-paned windows; and all he did was substantial and honest — and beautiful, in its humble way, by accident.

But about that bureau?

Two strong, skillful men, engaged for the purpose, juggled with it, this way and that, muttering words of equally great strength — *and it went upstairs.* Had it been a quarter of an inch wider, they said afterward, the feat would have been impossible. It was a small margin, but it will save the company from having to knock timidly on the library door when it wishes to dress for dinner.

ASKING FOR A RAISE

HAVE you ever asked for a raise in salary? If you have not, there is something coming to you in the way of a brand new feeling: I mean the sensation you experience while approaching the boss on this quest. It is not just like sea-sickness; it is not exactly the same as dropping ten stories in an elevator, yet there are points of similarity to it in each of these. Walking into the dentist's office with a tooth aching to be pulled approximates it as nearly as anything else, although in this case, the pain is reversed: the boss is the one who has the pain, and you are the one to do the pulling.

As much depends upon your approach to the boss as does on your approach to the green, to use an expression of golf. You must not shoot too far; neither should you foozle and have to make an extra attempt. But go right in as if you belonged there. Never mind speaking about the weather as a self-starting device; say what is on your mind. He can find out about the atmospheric conditions by looking out the window.

When you go in on the green carpet the boss is very busy. He is frowning and looks decidedly squally. The thought comes over you that you will not say what

you meant to; that this is not the time anyway, and besides he probably won't give it to you and you will feel chagrined; and that you are an ass for coming in there at all. These are not separate thoughts, but one sickening, panic-stricken lurch of your brain. It is lucky that the boss does not look up and see the expression on your face, because he would think that you had either lost your reason or had been taken violently ill. As it turns out, he leads.

'Well, Percival?'

He manages to put a fatherly tone into these two words. He also contrives to inject into them a something which tells you that he is about to refuse your request, if you have courage enough left to make it, and that he is going to feel hurt about the whole thing. You could feel sorry for him if you were not so busy feeling sorry for yourself. How he manages to do this is a mystery and a subject on which only a boss could write.

The panic-stricken feeling abates just enough for you to see a mental picture of General Putnam going down the long flight of stone steps after something very fierce (you cannot remember just what), Nathan Hale making his famous wish, Horatius at the bridge, or Washington crossing the Delaware. With these examples of heroic endeavor prodding you on, you say the words. They are not the words that you have rehearsed; no, indeed. They are very extemporaneous. They are simple Anglo-Saxon words, not grammatically put together and totally different from any that you had planned to say. However, they are out and you do not feel like Atlas any longer.

A fleeting pain seems to pass though the boss, as if he had been secretly and suddenly stabbed. This wears

away, only to be succeeded by a long, thoughtful look, suggesting that he has not only been hurt, but surprised. (The old rascal knew what you wanted when you came in.)

'Well, you know, Percival, times are not what they should be. We 're under a big expense and the way things are, — I don't know. Let 's see, how long have you been with us?'

You tell him, and he swings in the swivel chair the employees gave him last Christmas and looks out the window. He seems to be pondering over the terrific expense the firm is laboring under. You had entertained an idea that the concern was highly prosperous. But all your brains have been left outside and you gravely accept the thought that the business is tottering on the brink of failure. There is something the matter with your heart, you find. Too much smoking, probably. If you have sense enough to keep quiet, he will make the next move.

'Well, I guess it 's all right. You can tell Barker on the way out that I said you could have four dollars more after this.'

You beam. Words of thanks come in a jumble, and perhaps a mist steals over your eyes.

The boss deprecatingly raises his hand, growling, 'Not at all, not at all.' Then he turns to the burden he bears, which he somehow makes you feel has become four dollars more of a burden. You steal softly out, leaving him to the figures on the pad in front of him. They are the comparison of his golf score with that of Colonel Bogey, though you do not know that.

The door closes, and you take a couple of steps which no Russian dancer could even equal. You tell Barker, trying to keep your voice down where it

belongs. Barker smiles. You do not know what that smile means, but you will know some day, when you are a Barker.

That evening you tell her. A thing like this must be told at just the right moment. The telling must not be delayed; neither should it be an abrupt overture to a pleasant evening. One thing is certain: you will tell it casually. Should you be smoking, you will flick the ash from your cigarette as a period to the sentence. If you are not smoking, you will brush an imaginary speck from your knee. These are the only two gestures possible. She will say, 'No, *really?*' And you answer, 'Uh-huh.' And what does it matter then whether you are going to be a Barker or a Boss?

THE DAILY THEME EYE

WHEN I was an undergraduate at Harvard our instructors in English composition endeavored to cultivate in us a something they termed 'The daily theme eye.' This peculiar variety of optic, I fear, always remained a mystery to a majority of the toilers after clearness, force, and elegance. Clearness, force, and even a certain degree of elegance, may be acquired; but the daily theme eye, like the eye for the sights of a rifle, may be discovered, developed, trained — but not acquired. It comes by the grace of Heaven, not of the Harvard or any other English department, and its possession is often one of the marks of the man whose destiny compels him to write. The Harvard English department has but given it a name; it has no local habitation. It is found in Henry James and the police reporter of the New York *Sun;* it illuminates the pages of *The Harvard Monthly* (sometimes) and of

George Moore. It winks at you in Heine and peers solemnly in Mrs. Humphry Ward. And it flashes and beams in a little lady I know who has written nothing save sprightly letters all the days of her life and never opened Hill's *Rhetoric* under the shade of the Washington Elm.

The fairy who stood over my cradle, though he forgot the gold spoon and much else besides, at least bestowed the gift of this wonderful optic. It brought me my college degree; for when other courses failed — which means when I failed in other courses — there was always English; it has brought me a living since; but more than all else it has brought me enjoyment, it has clothed the daily walk with interest, the teeming, noisy town with color and beauty, 'the society of my contemporaries,' to use Emerson's big phrase for my little purpose, with stimulating excitement. It has turned the panorama of existence into a play, or rather a thousand plays, and brought after sorrow or pain the great comfort of composition.

Daily themes in my day had to be short, not over a page of handwriting. They had to be desposited in a box at the professor's door not later than ten-five in the morning. A classmate of mine, when an epigram was called for, once wrote, 'An epigram is a lazy man's daily theme written at ten-three A.M.' And because of this brevity, and the necessity of writing one every day whether the mood was on you or not, it was not always easy — to be quite modest — to make these themes literature, which, we were told by our instructors, is the transmission through the written word, from writer to reader, of a mood, an emotion, a picture, an idea. I hate to think how few, in fact, of all the thousands that were poured into that yawning box were

literature, how seldom the poor instructors could dip their pens into their pots of red ink and write the magic A on the back. Their sarcastic comments were surely excusable. I have even forgiven the young man with hair like yellow corn-tassels, who scrawled on verses of mine, required to be written in imitation of some poet, 'This may be O'Shaughnessy, it is n't poetry.' Did he think thus to kill two song birds with one stone? Well, the effort of those of us who were sincere and comprehending in our pursuit of the elusive power to write was to make our themes literature as often as possible; and to do this the first essential was the choice of a subject. Not everything one sees or does or thinks can take shape on a page of paper and reproduce itself for the reader. Selection was the first requirement.

It became needful, then, to watch for and treasure incidents that were sharply dramatic or poignant, moods that were clear and definite, pictures that created a single clean impression. The tower of Memorial seen across the quiet marshes against the cool, pink sky of evening; the sweep of a shell under the bridge and the rush of the spectators to the other rail to watch the needle-like bow emerge, and the bent, brown backs of the crew; the chorus girls, still rubbing the paint from their cheeks with a tiny handkerchief wrapped over the forefinger, coming out of a stage entrance into the snow; the first sharp impression of a book just read or a play just seen, — these were the things we cherished, for these we could put on a page of paper with a beginning, a middle, and an end, and with some show of vividness. What we came to do, then, was to keep a note-book of our impressions, and when in June our themes were returned to us we had

a precious record for the year. By training the daily theme eye, we watched for and found in the surroundings of our life, as it passed, a heightened picturesqueness, a constant wonder, an added significance. That hardened cynic, the professional writer, will smile and say, 'You saw copy.' Yes, we saw copy; but to see copy is to see the significant, to clarify what the ear and heart and eye receive, to add light and shadow to the monochrome of life.

My college room-mate, a blessed boy full of good humor and serious purpose, was as incapable of acquiring the daily theme eye as a cat of obeying the eighth commandment. His idea of a daily theme was a task, not a pleasure. If there was no chance to write a political editorial, he supplied an anecdote of his summer vacation. Once he described a cliff he had seen in Newfoundland, and, determined to be pictorial, he added, 'tumbling waterfalls' and 'sighing pines.' Unfortunately, the instructor who read it had also been in Newfoundland, and he pointed out that his investigations of the cliff in question had failed to disclose either 'tumbling waterfalls' or 'sighing pines.' My room-mate treated the matter as a joke; he could not see that he had been guilty of any fault. And yet he is a much more moral man than I, with a far more troublesome conscience. Truth to his principles he would die for. But truth to the picture his mind retained and his hand tried to portray in the medium of literature, to him so trivial and unimportant, he could not grasp. What did it matter? So it would never occur to him to record in his themes the fleeting impressions of his daily life, to sit up half the night trying to pack into the clumsy frame of words the recollection of a strangely innocent face

seen suddenly in the flash of an opened door down a dark, evil alley where the gusts of winter swirled. He went to bed and never knew a headache or jumpy nerve. Yet I could not help thinking then that there was something in life he was missing besides the ultimate mark in our composition course. And I cannot help thinking that there is something in life he misses still.

But perhaps that is only my fancy. George Moore says that happiness is no more than a faculty for being surprised; and it is the sudden vista, the beauty of a city square seen through falling snow, a street-car drama, the face of a passing woman, the dialogue of friends, which make the surprises for the man with the eye for copy. George Moore himself has a daily theme eye of preternatural keenness, and he may be speaking only for a class. Happiness for my roommate lies, I suspect, rather in his faculty for not being surprised. A sudden accession of emotion at the sight of an unexpected view, for instance, would probably be immensely disconcerting. And if he should go into an art museum, as I did the other day, and see a little marble boy with a slightly parted mouth wet his lips with his tongue, I truly believe he would rush off to the doctor's at once, very unhappy, instead of rushing joyfully home to try to put the illusion into a sonnet! Well, every class has its Pharisaism, which in reality is n't a form of priggishness, at all, but merely a recognition of difference. He thinks I am impractical, a bit odd, not quite a grown man. I think he is —a charming fellow. We are about quits on that!

A DEFENSE OF WHISTLING

WHISTLING girls and crowing hens have been bracketed together by the wisdom of the ages, but 'bad ends' have been allotted these ladies, because they have not as yet learned to perform in tune, not from anything inherently bad in whistling *per se*. Unfortunately the proverb has, however, by a fatal association of ideas, reflected on a noble art. Because girls and newsboys pipe 'ragtime' without regard to the diatonic scale, why should my avocation be banned by polite society? It would be quite as absurd to consider singing *outré* because burly baritones persist in roaring 'Wake not, but hear me, Love,' at afternoon concerts; or to put the piano down as vulgar because a certain type of person is always whanging Chaminade out of season. (For my part, I have never discovered Chaminade's season; but then I am only a fiddler.)

My avocation consists in whistling to myself the most beautiful melodies in existence, and I go about in a state of perpetual surprise that no one else does likewise. Never yet have I heard a passing stranger whistling anything worth while; but I have my plans all laid for the event. The realization of that whistle will come with a shock like the one Childe Roland felt when something clicked in his brain, and he had actually found the dark tower. I hope I shall not be

> a-dozing at the very nonce,
> After a life spent training for the

sound, and so lose my man among the passers-by. When I hear him I shall chime in with the second violin or 'cello part perhaps, or, if he has stopped, I

shall pipe up the answering melody. Of course he will be just as much on the alert as I have been, and will search eagerly for me in the crowd, and then we shall go away together, and be crony-hearts forever after. I am constantly constructing romances, each with this identical beginning, for what could be more romantic than to find by chance the only other one in all the world who shared your pet hobby? But I am growing old in the quest, and sometimes fear that I may never find my stranger, though I attain the years and the technique of the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

The human whistle is the most delightfully informal of instruments. It needs no inglorious lubrication of joints and greasing of keys like its dearest relative the flute. It is not subject to the vocalist's eternal cold. It knows no *inferno* of tuning and snapping strings, nor does it need resin for its stomach's sake and its often infirmities. Its only approach to the baseness of mechanism is in a drainage system akin to that of the French horn, but far less brazen in its publicity.

I love my whistle quite as I love my violin, but in a different way. They stand, the one to the other, very much in the relation of my little, profanely-extra-illustrated school Horace to that magnificent codex of the fifth century, the gem of my library. The former goes with a black pipe and a holiday, with luncheon under a bush by a little trout stream: the latter implies scholarship, or else visitors and Havana cigars.

One of the best qualities of the whistle is that it is so portable. The whistler may not even have rings on his fingers, but he shall have music wherever he goes; and to carry about the wealth of Schubert and Beethoven and Chopin is more to me than much fine gold.

Brahms is one of the most whistle-able of composers, and my two specifics for a blue Monday are to read Stevenson's Letters and to whistle all the Brahms themes I can remember. I will begin perhaps with concertos, then run through the chamber music and songs (which I prefer without words), reserving the overtures, suites, choral works, and symphonies for a climax. The most ultramarine devils could hardly resist the contagious optimism of a Brahms whistling-bout, and I believe that if Schopenhauer, 'that prince of miserabilists,' had practiced the art, it would have made him over into a Stanley Hall.

Whistling to keep up the courage has passed into an adage, but the Solomons have said nothing about whistling to keep up the memory. Yet nothing is better for the musical memory than the game of 'Whistle.' A whistles a melody. If B can locate it, he wins the serve. If he cannot, A scores one. If the players have large répertoires, the field should be narrowed down to trios, or songs, or perhaps first movements of symphonies. I still feel the beneficent effects of the time when I used to sit with my chum in a Berlin café into the small hours, racking my brain and my lips to find a theme too recondite for him. For such purposes the whistle is exquisitely adapted. One often hears it remarked that the violin is almost human; but the whistle is absolutely human and, unlike the violin, is not too formal to take along on a lark. Though it cannot sing to others

> Of infinite instincts, — souls intense that yearn,

it will stick loyally and cheerily by you through thick and thin, like

the comrade heart
For a moment's play,
And the comrade heart
For a heavier day,
And the comrade heart
Forever and aye.

The whistle is one of the best tests of musical genius. Not that the divine spark lurks behind truly puckered lips, but you may be sure that something is amiss with that composer whose themes cannot be whistled; although, of course, the converse will not hold. He lacks that highest and rarest of the gifts of God, — melody. Certain composers nowadays, with loud declarations that this is the Age of Harmony, are trying to slur over their fatal lack by calling melody antiquated, a thing akin to perukes and bustles — and sour grapes. By changing the key twice in the measure, they involve us so deep in harmonic quicksands as to drown, momentarily, even the memory of Schubert. If this school prevails it will, of course, annihilate my avocation, for I have known but one man who could whistle harmony, and even he could not soar above thirds and sixths. I shudder when I imagine him attacking a D'Indy symphony!

The whistle has even wider possibilities than the voice. It is quite as perfect and natural an instrument, and exceeds the ordinary compass of the voice by almost an octave. It can perform harder music with more ease and less practice. It has another advantage: in whistling orchestral music, the drum-taps, the double-bass, the bassoon may be 'cued in' very realistically and with little interruption by means of snores, grunts, wheezes, clucks, *et cetera*.

The whistle's chief glory is that it is human, yet

single. Sometimes, especially during certain operas, I am inclined to think that when Music was 'married to Immortal Verse' she made a *mésalliance*. The couple seldom appear to advantage together; their 'winding bouts' are sad public exhibitions of conjugal infelicity. Instead of coöperating, each misrepresents and stunts the other's nature. Both insist on talking at the same time, so that you can understand neither one plainly, and, as is generally the case, the lady gets in the first and last word, and shouts poor I. V. down between whiles. You would hardly take her, as she strides about red-faced and vociferous, for the goddess to whom you gave your heart when she was a maiden. But there, you must remember that I am only a fiddler who prefers 'absolute music,' and believes in the degeneracy of opera as a form of art.

The whistle has almost as many different qualities of tone as the voice, although it is so young as still to be in the boy-chorister stage. Who can predict the developments of the art after its change of whistle? I, for one, fear that it will be introduced into the symphony orchestra before long, and this, I am sure, will make it vain, and destroy its young *naïveté*, and its delicious informality. It would be like punching holes into my dear old black pipe, fitting it with a double reed, and using it in the future works of Max Reger as a kind of piccolo-oboe. I go about furtively looking at conductors' scores for fear I may see something like this: —

Whistle I
Whist. II
Whist. Profondo.

But with all my heart I hope that my avocation may

not be formalized until after I have hung up the fiddle and the bow on the staff of my life as a sort of double-bar.

THE SATURDAY-NIGHT BATH

CERTAIN aspirations are so deeply rooted in the souls of men that they persist through generations in spite of every obstacle. I write in defense of one of these — a time-honored ceremonial, the Saturday-night bath.

If you are city-bred, and accustomed from childhood to step from a warm bed to a warm bathroom and thrill to an every-morning scrub, you are probably scornful of me and my theme. Let me ask you a question. Did you ever, on a freezing winter day, stand precariously in one slippery wash-basin while you sponged your shivering self with about a quart of water from another china bowl? If you think you would have persisted in this, morning after morning, in an unheated bed room, through zero weather, I salute you! You belong to the elect. I know there are such people; my sister Frances was one of them. I remember that mother called in the family doctor to see if he did n't think it was this peculiar habit that made Frances so thin.

My own childhood, as it stretches out behind me, is punctuated at regular intervals by furiously busy Saturdays and shining, immaculate Sundays. The weekly bath was a fixed institution — no one ever went to church without it; but the problem of bathing eleven boisterous (and occasionally rebellious) children, and getting everybody finished and out of the way by nine o'clock at night, made Saturday an interesting day for

mother. Considering the difficulties we had to contend with, I think we were a very industrious family about bathing. In the first place, the reservoir on the kitchen range had to be filled thirteen separate times. It was the unvarying rule that each member of the family old enough to carry a pail must bring water from the cistern in the wood-shed for the one next in turn. It was a sad day for the wretch who used all the water and forgot to fill the reservoir. Then the tub had to be emptied each time, by dipping out the water until it was light enough to carry. Gerald and Charlie got around this once by using the same water; but mother strongly discouraged them from ever trying it again.

We bathed according to age. The baby, whoever he was, had his bath right after breakfast, while such members of the family as were not otherwise occupied stood around in an adoring circle, ready to hand the safety-pins, to warm blankets, or fly upstairs for some forgotten accessory. (I must not give the impression that the baby was washed only on Saturday. He had his bath every morning until there was a newer one.) After he was tucked away for his nap the younger children, one at a time, engaged mother's attention until dinner. She did n't superintend any but the very smallest; but she rigidly inspected each child before he was allowed to step from the tub — and woe to the culprit who had failed to wash behind his ears! We older ones took turns during the afternoon, and we had to be ready promptly and be swift in action, for getting thirteen baths out of an ordinary range-reservoir requires a high grade of efficiency. Six o'clock found us gathered around the supper table, radiantly clean and ravenously hungry. But the crowning cere-

monial of the whole day occurred at nine in the evening, when mother filled the tub for father and laid out his clean things. Mother always encouraged father in bathing, and made it as easy for him as she could. In fact, as I look back upon it, I think it was mother's deep yearning for the bath that kept us all in the paths of virtue. Her own ablutions occurred late at night, after the rest of the family were sound asleep.

Stationary tubs and running water were virtually unknown in Brierly at that time, and our experiments with substitutes were varied and interesting. I remember a tin tub, painted blue outside and white inside, with a back to lean against like a sleepy-hollow armchair, and little round soap-dishes on each side of the rim. We children sat Turk-fashion in it, and could lean back comfortably between scrubs. It must have been in one of these intervals of rest that Caroline, burning with injury over some family disagreement, scratched the following sentence on the inside of the rim, with a pin: 'Edward is an ugly, naughty boy. Hi yi, ki yi!' Edward's bath came after Caroline's, and this judgment confronted him weekly, as long as the tin tub endured.

The rubber tub was bought when Tryphena had inflammatory rheumatism, and was a great luxury in those days. It was made of pliant rubber, and hung from a wooden frame which rested on two chairs. In repose it was about the size and shape of an ordinary porcelain tub, but it 'gave' so unexpectedly when occupied, and was so very slippery, that getting in was a science, staying in an adventure, and getting out an art.

The courthouse burned down just about the time that mother read *The Last Days of Pompeii*, and I

think a vision of Roman *tepidaria* must have lingered in her mind when she built the Little Room. Father sent home two tall glass doors from the courthouse fire — all that was left of the building. Presumably they were given to him because he was the judge. Mother conceived the idea of walling in the little porch just off the kitchen and using these glass doors as part of the east wall. This was how the Little Porch became the Little Room. In the floor of this room mother instructed the surprised carpenter to build a tub, about six feet long by two and a half wide. He made it beautifully smooth inside, and calked the seams so that it could not leak. A drain was constructed leading into a gravel bank under the porch. The tub had a cover which matched the floor and which, when let down, transformed our bathroom to sun parlor. We were jubilant over this invention when it was finished; but long before the carpenter's bill was paid on the installment plan, our illusions were dispelled. The drain refused to work as it should, and for a discouraging length of time after each bath the tub would stand half full of water. After the cover had been left up once or twice, and several of the family had walked into it in the dark, we gradually gave up using it.

We had one small room called the Bathing Room, but no one ever bathed in it within my memory. The old black walnut washstand used to be kept there, which perhaps gave rise to its name. Later, as the family grew and closets became congested, hooks were installed all around the Bathing Room, and we hung our Sunday clothes on them. Still later, the baby's crib stood there — but the name remained. This, and another room called the China Closet, where no china

ever was, together with the Library, where mother kept her canned fruit, were a source of never-failing glee to visitors.

In summer we sometimes bathed upstairs, but we objected to this in our youth because the water had to be carried up and down. It is true that Sherman and John conceived the labor-saving idea of pouring it out on the wood-shed roof, but they did it only once. Mother happened to be giving an order to the grocery boy at the moment, and he came out of the back door just in time to get the soapy flood down his back.

As we grew older, we developed an etiquette of bathing. A small clique, led by Frances, insisted that it was only decent to save half the water to rinse off in. Some of the rest of us warmly argued this point. We held that it was impossible to take a real bath in half a reservoir of water, and that the results obtained by rinsing did n't compensate for the extra labor involved. Personally, I went through life unrinsed until we moved to the city. Arthur was the one to found a cult of outdoor bathing. In an angle formed by the walls of the dining-room and the library he constructed an impromptu room of sheets strung on clothes-lines, with the russet apple tree for one corner. 'No roof but the blue above us. No floor but the beaten sod.' The idea took like wildfire. Bathing out of doors, with the apple blossoms and blue sky over our heads, took on a tinge of romance that was not to be resisted. But of course it was limited to the very warmest days in summer.

When all was said and done, the thing we always came back to, like returning to the old-fashioned safety-pin after all these new-fangled contrivances to keep your skirt in place, was a wooden wash-tub by

the kitchen stove. There we arranged clothes-bars and chairs, draped them with sheets, blankets, and father's army blanket, to insure privacy, and successively performed the Saturday rite, while the rest of the family waited their turn.

Of course the old order changed in time. Galvanized tubs succeeded wooden ones, and finally a windmill and a tank on top of the house brought running water. When father gave up a country judgeship for a law office in town, and we moved to the city, bathing became an every-day affair.

I would not say a word in deprecation of modern plumbing. Beyond a doubt it is one of our greatest blessings and the herald of a true democracy, when there shall be neither a 'great unwashed' nor a 'submerged tenth.' But, somehow, Saturday has lost its savor. Life is tamer than it used to be. No man in his senses would wish, in this day of Pullman sleepers, to cross the Great Plains in a prairie schooner, but the names of the men who risked their lives to do it are enshrined in history. And so I think we ought to build a little altar to the middle-class country mothers who, in the face of every obstacle, kept the Saturday-night bath a sacred institution, and handed it down to their children inviolate.

THE DICTATORSHIP OF AN ACROBATIC MIND

A FEW months ago one laboring under the bane of deliberation queried: —

'Is it worse to be thought-less or thought-tied?'

It is neither the one nor the other. Both are merely bad.

Worse than either is the misfortune of possessing mental faculties so constructed that with the slightest pull of the intellectual string the whole equipment springs into instantaneous motion after the manner of an acrobatic jumping-jack.

This condition is the *bête noire* of my existence. The severest cudgelings have failed to keep my insubordinate thoughts under control. They have bullied and oppressed me until I feel myself the abject prey of every chance comer. The weakest gosling of an idea is as potent against me as the cannonade of an encyclopædia.

I listen to a lecture or a sermon. The orator begins to roll a ponderous period up a difficult hill. Snap! I have caught the impulse of a word or two, and off I go in leaps and bounds, hither and thither, but ever on until I arrive at the top, and find I have gathered in my jiggling flight so motley a crew of ideas they surely must begin with time and finish in eternity — yet still they continue to arrive. I am contemplating them in dismay when the conscious movement of a neighbor attracts me. A new hat! In one instant I have inspected every hat and coiffure in my vicinity, planned my next season's suit, and determined the rearrangement of my back hair. Another jump, and I am back with the speaker; he is but halfway up. By a strenuous effort of will I accompany him to the top, that I may be present when he arrives at one of the foregone conclusions I have already arrayed there. If by mischance he does not reach the end expected, impelled by the stimulus of a new view-point away I fly, and thus miss the opening of the next sentence. It is not a fair start, but no matter, the process is the same. One leap, and I have returned; another,

advanced, arrived, double, turn and twist, back and forth, up and down, in and out, and alas, too frequently never touching bottom. It is arduous.

What is being thought-tied compared to this? A bann of repose, and irresponsible thoughtlessness?—an unattainable joy to a mind whose only respite is an abeyance, a waiting for a fresh pull of the string. Nor is mine that happy-go-lucky species of mind which jumps at conclusions. I jump to conclusions indeed, but it is a series of jumps, a succession of leaps from one peak to another, until arriving at the summit, afar off it may be from the one intended, but guarded by a bulwark of opinions, here I stop, breathless.

As a consequent of having stated these facts, a confession is now forced upon me: this high vaulting from one thought to another, this springboard association of ideas, has created within me a memory of which I stand in deadly awe.

It is unnecessary to recall to me the fact that psychologists consider memory of a very low order of intellect. I can substantiate the statement.

But I protest that when I was young I had no memory, that this thing has grown apace with my years, the malevolent product of my mental gymnastics, until now, full grown, the amount of material it can furnish for the hashing of thoughts is something appalling.

Overworked, my will has been dethroned and my judgment debased. But whatever the inner misery caused by these conditions, the unseemly outward manifestation is causing even my friends to regard me askance. There was a time when to me, also, the supplying of dates was something uncanny, the recalling of long-buried facts positively gruesome, and the

quick application of quotations a decided bore. The finding of a word for which a friend appears to be searching — if by ill-luck it happens to be of a slightly different meaning and thus throws him off the track from what he was intending to say — is not often considered a friendly act. To see too quickly the point of a story and then forget to laugh at the proper time, or to insert a missing detail and with it a chance insinuation that you have heard the story before, does not enhance one's popularity. Undertake the telling for one's self and quickly one's auditors are swamped in a sea of suggested ideas, and the climax is presented to submerged ears. Then in desperation one tries another tactic, one or two bold strokes, and the point appears so quickly that it passes for a mere detail. You are sure to be left speechless, with your audience politely waiting for the dénouement.

Poets pray for man the gift of a strong athletic brain, most especially the unhappy possessor of the acrobatic mind. Such a one, guided by the uncertain conduct of a mind which moves in spasmodic leaps and jumps, stimulated by any chance word or expression, can never travel up the road of Parnassus in the good fellowship of comrades. He can never scale the heights in the company of the elect.

FURNACE AND I - Wm. Tanner

SUMMER is the favorite time to advertise furnaces, for, although a pacifist might argue that being prepared for cold weather encourages frost, the practical persons who make and sell heating plants are firm believers in preparedness. They produce diagrams showing how *their* furnace bisects the coal bill, and pictures

showing how easily a pretty child can run it from the front hall. But my furnace is different. I defy the prettiest child imaginable to run it. Indeed, in a strict sense, I defy anybody to run it, for this furnace has a mind of its own and an odd ambition to behave like a thermometer. On a warm day it goes up, on a cold day it goes down; in zero weather it takes all the time of a determined man to head it off from becoming a large, inconvenient refrigerator. As for bisecting coal bills, the creature *likes coal.* I have even thought that it made strange, self-congratulatory, happy noises whenever there occurred a rise in the price of its favorite edible.

Before meeting this furnace I had lived in apartments, and my mental conception of a ton of coal had been as of something enormous, sufficient to heat the average house a month. A furnace was to me a remote mystery operated by a high priest called 'janitor,' whom I vaguely connected with the lines of Smollett —

> Th' Hesperian dragon not more fierce and fell;
> Nor the gaunt, growling janitor of Hell.

I took my heat as a matter of course. If I wanted more of it, I spoke warmly to the janitor through a speaking tube — and, after a while, there was more heat. If I wanted less I spoke to him coldly, in the same distant, godlike way — and, after a while, there was less heat. In neither case, I discovered, did an ordinary tone of voice get any result whatever; and, although a fat man himself, he sometimes growled back through the tube very much like the gaunt specimen mentioned by Smollett. But I gave little thought to him. I had what is called an 'intelligent idea' that

to produce more heat he opened a 'draught,' and to reduce heat he closed it, the effect of a draught on a furnace being just the opposite to its effect on a janitor. At night he 'shook the furnace down' and in the morning he 'shook the furnace up.' One gathers such knowledge casually, picks it up here and there without conscious effort or realization. I had in fact no more curiosity about the furnace than about the sun, for I seemed as unlikely ever to run one heater as the other.

Then, like many another man who has lived in apartments, I turned suburbanite. I had a furnace, and I had to run it myself. How well I remember that autumn day when I started my first furnace fire!

There sat the monster on the floor of the cellar, impassive as Buddha and apparently holding up the house with as many arms as an octopus, hollow arms through which presently would flow the genial heat. I peeked cautiously through a little door into his stomach, and marveled at its hollow immensity. I reached in till my arm ached — and my hand dangled in empty space. But my intelligence told me that there must be a bottom. Crumpling a newspaper into a great wad, I dropped it down, down into the monster's gullet, where it vanished forever; I crumpled and dropped another; I continued until at last — oh, triumph of mind and industry over incalculable depth! — I *saw newspaper*, and had something tangible on which to erect a pyre of kindlings. Where I could reach I laid them crosswise, and where I could n't I tossed them in at varying angles, gaining skill with practice.

'It is like a great wooden nest!' I cried in astonishment. '*Now* I know why the coal I have bought for my furnace is called "egg."'

I lit the fire and made a grand smoke.

It rose through the kindlings; it piled out through the little door; it hung like great cobwebs to the roof of the cellar. With great presence of mind I hastily closed the little door and ran lightly up the cellar stairs. The smoke had preceded me; it got there first through the convenient registers; and more was coming. I met a woman.

'*Is* the house afire?' she asked excitedly.

'It is *not*,' I replied quietly, in a matter-of-course way. 'When you start your fire for the winter it always smokes a little.'

We opened the windows. We went outside and looked at the house. It leaked smoke at every crevice except, curiously enough, at the chimney. Ah-h-h-h-h! I saw what had happened. I groped my way to the cellar and opened the back damper. Now the smoke went gladly up the chimney, and the view through the little door was at once beautiful and awful: it was like looking into the heart of an angry volcano.

Evidently it was time to lay the eggs on the nest.

I shoveled the abyss full of coal, and the volcano became extinct. Presently, instead of a furnace full of fire I had a furnace full of egg coal. I began taking it out, egg by egg, at first with my fingers and then with the tongs from the dining-room fireplace. And when the woman idly questioned me as to what I was going to do down cellar with the tongs, I bit my lip....

To the man who runs it (an absurd term as applied to a thing that has no legs and weighs several tons) the furnace is his first thought in the morning and his last thought at night. His calendar has but two seasons — winter, when the furnace is going; and summer, when the furnace is out. But in summer his

thoughts are naturally more philosophical. He sees how profoundly this recent invention (which he is not at the time running) has changed man's attitude toward nature. Why, he asks himself, have past generations of men regarded autumn as continuously melancholy, which it is n't, and spring as continuously cheerful, which it is n't either? Because they had no furnaces. They could n't warm their houses in winter. They suffered. Autumn was melancholy because it led to winter, and spring was cheerful because it preceded summer when nobody needed a furnace. It is unfortunate, he realizes whimsically, that a man often forgets what a blessing his furnace is at the time he is running it; but even so there is a kind of discipline, a strengthening of the moral nature —

[I am, of course, not referring to those furnaces which are endowed with more than the average human intelligence; those Superfurnaces met with in the advertisements, which shake themselves down, shovel their own coal, carry and sift their own ashes, regulate their own draughts, and, if they do not actually order and pay for their own coal, at least consume it as carefully as if they did. Such furnaces — so long as nobody gives me one — seem positively weakening. There is no struggle, no opposition of wills, no variety of experience, no exercise of those noble characteristics, faith, hope, and charity. For the man with a Superfurnace life is too easy.

'Toddlekins,' he says to his little daughter, 'press the button.'

'Yes, Papa,' says Toddlekins. She puts down her doll, skips merrily into the front hall, presses the button — and that is all there is to it.

But with a furnace like mine a man experiences all

the emotions of which he is capable. He loves, he hates, he admires, he despises, he grieves, he exults. There have been times when I have felt like patting my furnace; and again times when I have slammed his little door and spoken words to him far, far hotter than the fire that smouldered and refused to burn in his bowels. I judge from what I have read that taming a wild animal must be a good deal like taming a furnace, with one important exception. The wild-animal-tamer never loses his temper or the beast would kill him; but a furnace, fortunately for suburban mortality, cannot kill its tamer.

When his furnace happens to be good-natured, however, a man will often find the bedtime hour with it pleasant and even enjoyable. He descends, humming or whistling, to the cellar; and the subsequent shaking and shoveling is, after all, no more than a healthy exercise which he would not otherwise take and which will make him sleep better. He is friendly with this rotund, coal-eating giant; he regards it almost like a big baby which he is putting to bed — or at least he *might* so regard it if putting a baby to bed was one of his recognized pleasures. In such a mood he may even nod back gayly over his shoulder as he goes up the cellar stairs, and find himself saying 'Good night, Old Furnace.' Or, if he has lately been reading one of our more popular authors, 'Good night, Old Top.'

But oh, what a difference in the morning! He awakes in the dark, startled perhaps from some pleasant dream by the wild alarm-m-m-m-m-m-m of a clock under his pillow; and outside the snug island of warmth on which he lies, the Universe stretches away in every direction, above, below, and on every side of him, cold, dreary, and unfit for human habitation, to

and beyond the remotest star. In that cold Universe how small he is! — how warm and how weak! Instantly he thinks of the furnace, and the remotest star seems near by comparison. The thought of getting up and going down cellar seems as unreal as the thought of getting up and going to meet the sun at that pale streak which, through his easterly window, heralds the reluctant coming of another day. Yet he knows that he MUST and that eventually he WILL get up. In vain he tells himself how splendid, how invigorating will be the plunge *from his warm bed* right into the fresh, brisk, hygienic morning air.

The fresh, brisk, hygienic morning air does not appeal to him. Unwillingly he recalls a line in the Superfurnace advertisement — 'Get up warm and cozy' — and helplessly wishes that *he* had such a furnace. 'Like Andrew Carnegie!' he adds bitterly. At that moment he would anarchistically assassinate Andrew, provided he could do it without getting up. Nevertheless — he gets up! He puts on — 'Curse it, *where* is that sleeve?' — the bath robe and slippers that have been all night cooling for him, and starts on his lonely journey through the tomblike silence. Now, if ever, is the time to hum, but there is not a hum in him: down, down, down he goes to the cellar and peeks with dull hope through the familiar little door. 'Good morning, Fire.' He shakes, he shovels, he opens draughts and manipulates dampers. [And the Furnace, impassive, like a Buddha holding up the house with as many arms as an octopus, seems to be watching ~~him~~ with a grave yet idle interest.] Which is all the more horrible because it has no face.

THE FLAVOR OF THINGS

'Life is sweet, brother.' (Mr. Petulengro.)

THERE can be no doubt that for some people mathematics has flavor, even though for me it is as the apples of Sodom. I have known people who seemed to be in love with the triangles. Permutations and combinations and the doctrine of chances filled their souls with elation; they would rather wander over the area of a parallelogram than over the greenest meadow under heaven, collecting angles and sides as another would daisies and buttercups, and chasing the unknown quantity as another might a butterfly.

I envy these people this faculty which I can never hope to acquire. I used to try to work up a factitious enthusiasm for geometry by naming angle A Abraham, B Benjamin, C Cornelius, and so on; side AB then became Abrajamin, side BC Benjanelius, side AC Abranelius, and the perimeter Abrajaminelius, — the last a name of Miltonic sonorousness, mouth-filling, and perfectly pronounceable if one scanned it as catalectic trochaic tetrameter.

Although I never had the courage to introduce them to my teachers, I regarded the Abrajaminelian family with some affection until one day I tried to name the perimeter of a dodecagon, when I came to the conclusion that it would require less time to learn the proposition by heart than to learn the name; and from that day I gave up all attempt to infuse an adventitious interest into Legendre, and simply memorized him.

I have heard geometry described as a 'beautiful science,' but —

> If she be not fair to me,
> What care I how fair she be?

To me she was an obstacle in the path of knowledge, invisible, not hostile, but palpable and stubborn as the Boyg that gave Peer Gynt so much trouble. I tried in vain to squirm and wriggle past her. There is a possibility that I should still be blindly bumping that obstruction halfway up the Mathematical Mountains if my professor of solid geometry had not opportunely departed from college leaving no class-records behind him. I passed — by an intervention of Providence — and my days of pure mathematics were over; but I felt no undue elation, for applied mathematics remained. If I had impressed my instructors before as half-witted, here I was wholly witless. One cannot apply what one does not possess.

From a child I had had an obscure distrust of mechanism of all kinds. The people of Erewhon, you remember, feared it because they thought it had a soul: I feared it because it seemed to me to have none, until I discovered that its soul was mathematical, a new ground for trepidation. Even yet I cannot feel warmly toward a machine. I can gape with wonder as well as anybody as I watch the white paper fed in at one end of a press in, say, the Herald Building, and the Sunday Illustrated Supplement taken out at the other; but my wonder is only polite, merely intellectual; there is no heart in it. My half hour spent thus has been instructive, it may be, but joyless.

This curious diffidence, amounting to a covert hostility, I felt also in the presence of the celestial mechanics. I had no sense of comfort in the company of the stars and planets. For a while I might be interested in the inhabitants of Mars, but Jupiter's satellites and Saturn's rings could arouse no emotional response in me. I irrationally found more to wonder

at in a moon of green cheese than in a burned-out world.

Try as I may to overcome the aversions of my youth, I cannot help thinking of the quadratics and binomials of days long gone, whenever I look at a fly-wheel or a piston. Across the glories of the heavens I detect a shadow cast over my spirit when I tried on a college examination to explain parallax. At the time — for a day or two — I was rather proud of that explanation. Desiring, as usual, to get a picture of the thing, I used, I remember, the analogy of an umbrella. If it were raining, I said, and you had an open umbrella and you held it perpendicularly over you and then ran, you would get wetter than if you merely walked. Just what the connection was, I am — and doubtless was — unable to say; but it seemed very neat. I chuckled over it, and felt as if at last I was beginning to get ahead in astronomy. And then, briefly and coldly, the professor pronounced my analogy bosh, and the only glimmer of originality I ever evinced in his subject winked and went out.

If mathematics, pure and applied, had no flavor for me but an unpleasant one, I have no one to blame, I suppose, but myself, although, of course, I did blame my teachers. All through my boyhood I held the entirely unreasonable view that mathematicians were only slightly human, having, in fact, like their subject, no souls. Their subject as they presented it to me had a striking resemblance to the working of a machine, clean, precise, cold; it made me shiver. I felt for it the contempt of youth. Each science in turn I loved, as long as it had to do with things; but the moment mathematics entered, as it always did,

soon or late, my love, as milk at the addition of certain bacteria, curdled and turned bitter.

Only the other day I listened to a lecturer on sunspots expatiating on the enfranchising and ennobling power of his science, teaching as it does the majesty of God and his handiwork. I agreed, of course. Theoretically, I knew that he was right; yet, as for myself, I could not help preferring to wonder at the hand of the Almighty in the creation of a dandelion, a sparrow, a flounder.

> The best that 's known
> Of the heavenly bodies does them credit small.
> View'd close the Moon's fair ball
> Is of ill objects worst,
> A corpse in Night's highway, naked, fire-scarr'd, accurst;
> And now they tell
> That the Sun is plainly seen to boil and burst
> Too horribly for hell.

The poet speaks enthusiastically, as poets will; besides, he was a Catholic and may have been affected by doctrine; I cannot wholly ratify his sentiments, yet I can understand them and sympathize.

Botanist and biologist friends call upon me to admire a paramœcium or a spirogyra; they will grow quite enthusiastic over one, as you or I might over a dog or a baby. I can share their emotions, to a degree; these little creatures, as the same poet observes, 'at the least *do live*'; yet I find that I cannot love a paramœcium or a spirogyra, streptococcus and micrococcus arouse no friendly feelings, oscillaria and spirillum can never compete for my affections with a calf or a puppy. I can sympathize imaginatively with the microscopist who watches the contortions of an amœba or a polyp, its table manners and general

deportment; I can sit much longer at the microscope than at the telescope, and feel more comfortable there (Gulliver seems to have been more at his ease among the Lilliputians than among the Brobdingnagians); yet, once more, the hour spent thus has been instructive rather than joyous.

When I was a little boy, I used to get a great deal of satisfaction out of stroking a kitten or a puppy, or crushing a lilac leaf-bud for its spring fragrance, or smelling newly turned soil, or tasting the sharp acid of a grape tendril, or feeling the green coolness of the skin of a frog. I could pore for long minutes over a lump of pudding-stone, a bean-seedling, a chrysalis, a knot in a joist in the attic. There was a curious contentment to be found in these things. My pockets were always full of shells and stones, twigs and bugs; my room in the attic, of Indian relics, fragments of ore, birds' eggs, oak-galls, dry seeds and sea-weeds, bottled spiders, butterflies on corks. All the lessons of the schoolroom seemed of no consequence compared with Things so full of intimacy, of friendliness.

All children love things in this way, because of their appeal to the senses; and I suppose that all older people do, too, though they may not know it. My teachers used to try to make me see that a bird's egg or a hornet's nest is unimportant in comparison with the pageant of history, the beautiful mechanism of arithmetic; but what child cares anything about matters of abstract importance? I had a fondness for the hornet's nest because I could feel of it, poke a stick in at the door, and picture the fiery little termagants flying in and out, chewing their paper-pulp, building their walls. What had Washington praying at Valley Forge, or even Lawrence refusing to give

up the ship, to contribute comparable with this? Yet few even of my companions understood the ridiculous pleasure I found in carrying a crab's claw in my pocket, although they, too, after their own fashion, worshiped things. Their things were electric batteries and printing-presses and steam-engines.

My bosom-passion was for living things, — beast, bird, amphibian, reptile, fish, crustacean, insect, mollusc, worm, they were all one, if they were alive; and, wanting these, which could not well be carried in pockets or kept in bedrooms, I loved their reliques. While I was studiously collecting the *disjecta membra* of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, however, I did not realize that I was also laying up a store of memories that would in time make these seem about the only real things in the world. Here is the point. The common or curious but everyday objects of nature have for me a flavor so rich that they seem charmed, talismanic; they are my philosopher's stone, my quintessence, my One Thing which can charge the base metal of thought with the gold of feeling.

It is thus, I suppose, that poets and mystics are made, who see in the veriest stick or stone a symbol of one of the infinities. That I cannot do so, that I cannot make this passion the basis of a romanticism or a symbolism or a pantheism, is due, it may be, to my teachers who carefully discouraged any such nonsense. Practical people, they early taught me that 'life is real, life is earnest.' In church, too, I was duly informed that we are pilgrims and strangers traveling through a *barren* land.

Such instructions, running counter as they did to all I learned when left to myself, produced a curious state of anarchy in my microcosm. Belonging by

nature to the class of the poetical and by education to the class of the practical, I find myself torn between the desire to loiter and the desire to get on, passively to enjoy and actively to do. A practical conscience is fighting with a poetical unmorality.

I do not seem to be alone in this ambiguity. I see only an occasional person whom I could call completely practical, who treats things as if they were algebraic symbols, loving them only as they help him on in some enterprise or toward some goal. I find, on the contrary, the most hard-headed men and women collecting and cherishing books and prints and rose-bushes and tulips and stamps and coins and Colonial furniture and teapots and cats and dogs. Whether openly or secretly, brazenly or sheepishly, they are, nine-tenths of them, addicted to the boy's habit of filling his pockets with inconsiderable nothings which he can finger and fondle. Nearly all of them defend their hobby on practical grounds, as educative, or restful, or cultural, or what not, yet one and all are really following an instinct. If you could get them to be honest, they would confess that from these useless objects they derive a satisfaction that they cannot explain but that has its seat, not in any motives of practicality, not even, as many think, wholly in a sense of possession, but in the things themselves as things. The things are rich in implications, adumbrations, of course, fully felt perhaps only by the possessor, yet, notwithstanding the accretions of memory and fancy, still things, appealing now, as in childhood, to the senses with warmth and friendliness, as only objects of sense can. They are charmed things. 'Every one of them is 'like the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like the dwelling place of

infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value.'

Macaulay here is speaking of the connotation of words, that which gives most of its flavor to literature. It seems to me, however, that words, wonderful as they are in their power to set the mind running, still lag far behind things. They are at their best only secondhand. The phrase 'an old rusty spade,' suggests little except an antiquated implement for digging; but as a thing, an old spade may call up thoughts of death and the grave, snow forts, green gardens, buried treasure, — all the digging and ditching since Adam delved and Eve span.

I cannot think that it is entirely mundane to make such a to-do about that which we are accustomed to call the material. Although it is becoming old-fashioned to confess to a liking for domesticity, there are still few honest people who do not become attached to a home if they live in it long enough. It may be filled with surprisingly ugly furniture, and pictures such as may jar upon the finer sensibilities of the visitor, yet the ugliest becomes lovely with time.

Next to the fellowship of the family, it is the furniture that makes the home, and old furniture is best. We become fond of a chair or a table or a bed almost as we do of a person, because, as we say, of its associations. Now, I look upon things as the furniture of the world, furniture that was there when we came into it and will be there when we go out, — veritable antiques with all the charm of age about them. Try to picture a world empty of things material and furnished only with mathematical formulæ, and with so-

cial theories, theological speculations, and philosophic systems. Try to imagine — But no. These matters 'must be not thought after these ways; so, it will make us mad.'

Our forefathers had an interesting theory that swallows lived on air. Because the birds were observed to fly with their mouths open and never to come to ground, it was concluded that they must be classed with the knights of the Round Table and the chameleons as aerophagi. There are many aerophagi abroad in the land to-day, high-flying folk who live on airy *isms* and *ologies*, and who are scornful of those who long for less windy food. Why one man loves things and another theories, or why one loves things for their connotations and another for their use, or why one loves some kinds of things above all others, remains as inexplicable as why one cannot abide a gaping pig, why one a harmless necessary cat. It is all taste and temperament.

Yet there are times when I grow tired of socialism and industrialism and syndicalism and Nietzscheism and Bergsonism and feminism; times when I do not want to be a reformer or an uplifter or even a public-spirited citizen; when 'I do not hunger for a well-stored mind' and am tired of books, and of talking about them and urging others to read them. With much bandying-about these become unreal; one is filled with doubt about them, about their very existence, at least about their importance. It is in such moods that one longs for the kitten or puppy, the lilac leaf-buds, the bean seedling, the chrysalis, the frog.

THE LOST ART OF GOING TO CHURCH

At the age of three I was led up the church aisle and lifted to the high cushioned seat of the family pew. I have been there — generally speaking — ever since. I have no apology to offer, though my contemporaries frequently make me feel that one is due.

Of course I realize that intellectually, socially, and even spiritually, it is not quite 'modern' to go to church. I grant that if I were intellectual I should be developed beyond superstition and custom; if I were truly social I should join my kind at breakfasts; if I were modishly spiritual I should feel that a good book or a country walk is the common-sense way of salvation. I appreciate and approve those views, — and yet each Sunday finds me in the corner of my church pew. High moral motives do not bring me there, but rather sheer enjoyment. I say it brazenly: I like, I have always liked, to go to church.

Never have the moments dragged. In my early experience there was the female orphan asylum, which filled the cross-pews on each side the pulpit. It held me fascinated. The children dressed just alike, and I reasoned that each little girl on entering the Home had her wardrobe duplicated by the orphans already there. Sunday after Sunday I sat enthralled by a vision of the artistic consequences of my becoming an orphan. Would twice six pews of my pink lawn be most effective? or would the congregation prefer the same amount of white party-dress and blue bows?

With maturity, my subject-matter has changed, but not my frame of mind. Only this morning I sat in contented enjoyment of resources so broad that the hour of the service left many untouched. First of all,

I was rested by the mere bigness of the fine old building. I do like space. I think the most soul-satisfying thing about foreign cathedrals is not style of architecture, not stained glass, or carving, but rather length and breadth and height, — and emptiness.

After 'breathing deeply,' as it were, of the clear stretch between the arches, I glanced at my pew neighbors. I like them all, but I prefer those whom I have not met; and I hope never to find out that my conjectures concerning them are misfits. Transients, too, are responsive to the slightest effort of the imagination. Moreover, they afford an element of uncertainty, which, in the extremely conservative atmosphere of my church, is decidedly stimulating. Once a man dashed up the long aisle and began a fervid oration which was checked by a tactful habitué who took the intruder's arm, and begged him to come outside and speak where he might hope for an even larger audience. On another occasion, a young lady mounted the pulpit stairs and wailed: 'I am in love with So-and-So, but he does not love me.' I always look at transients with an eye to their dramatic possibilities.

My next resource was the minister. I never saw him before this morning, nor shall I in all likelihood see him again; he passed this way but once. I shall remember him, however, with pleasure. He was tall and academic, his hair was dark and came down in a thick peak on his forehead, leaving a narrow triangle on each side. Such a serious, boyish face. He was exactly like anybody's daguerreotype of Uncle Edward just before Shiloh, or father at the time of his marriage.

He reminded me, too, of a certain story-book hero, and then it naturally struck me how seldom the mod-

ern heroine of fiction goes to church. She has her moments, and her soul quivers on a cliff overlooking the sea which seems to sparkle in gay mockery of her sorrows, or before the library fire whose ashes but typify the ideals she has been forced to forswear. It takes an Edna Earl and a St. Elmo to appreciate a church as a background for thrilling love-making, or a Jane Eyre and a Rochester to present a climax before the altar.

What I really enjoy most about my conventional use of Sunday morning, is the opportunity it offers for ruminating (a bovine word that pleases me). For absolute safety from interruption, I know of no spot to equal a corner seat in a church pew. No door-bell can peal, no telephone jingle, no knock resound. Only cataclysmic disaster could intrude upon me here. For at least an hour I am free to 'reminisce,' to plan, to regret, to aspire. Why! often I have mapped out a month's work, or thought up and classified long-past events and ideas, or I have dreamed dreams so high and fine that they almost came true; and the succeeding week found me obedient, in some degree at least, to the heavenly vision.

Ah, the hope of the heavenly vision! Through centuries past it has drawn men and women to church; it will draw them through centuries to come. For our earthiness — which is of the spirit as of the flesh — craves an hour's surcease from struggle, an hour wherein, away from the shadows of our everyday world, we may dare hope to see, like the apostle of old, a light above the brightness of the sun, and to hear a Voice speaking unto us.

NIGHT

THE campfire had died down to a bed of waning coals. Overhead, the sky was moonless and without a cloud. The trees were about me, and darkly mysterious in the mountain night. The ravine where I had camped was quiet and slumberous, and neither night-bird nor coyote called through the silence. It seemed as if I alone of all the animals of the universe were sleepless and sentient in the night. Yet it was a peaceful insomnia which possessed me; it could be nothing else with the great suns and unfathomed reaches of stars above me, with the night and the trees for my shield and cloak, and the eye of the fire to keep me company. All that day I had been dreaming dreams and planning the future, and, what with my long tramp over the mountains and my continuous exalted mood of hope and unreasoned satisfaction, when I came to roll myself in my blankets by the fire I found myself sleepless and eager. My mind would not cease its activity, my nerves were high-strung and taut, and my heart beat passionately. Nor could I compose myself to rest, struggle as I would. The longer I lay, the more wakeful and energetic grew my mind, and Sleep, the benign goddess, was unconquerable and distant.

Sleeplessness, too, as well as Sleep, is to be courted, and welcomed when she comes in gentle guise. But too often she is terrible and Medusa-crowned, one of the unseen Eumenides, more feared than Morpheus or any old deity of nightmare and unconsciousness. Night after night, week after week, I have lain with wide eyes, staring deep into the void dark, my body composed and still only by a constant muscular effort,

while the curse of insomnia dragged on my nerves. Through the chained hours I would brood upon the evenings of childhood, when, healthily tired, thoughtless, contented, I would be put to bed at dusk and on the instant vanish, and appear again in the morning, so that for many years night and darkness were hardly even names to me, and their sensations were altogether unknown. But with insomnia came bitter knowledge, made all the more unhappy by a clear, even a vivid, recollection of childish peace and ignorance. I have experienced nightmares the most harrowing, but there can be no nightmare whose terror equals the terror of prolonged insomnia. Oh, the waking dreams and the memories, the illusions, fears, morbidities, the quick-changing black thoughts and fancies, the helpless waitings and tossings, — the utterly helpless waitings and tossings, — the myriad, Janus-faced elves and gnomes of the night, that dance on our pillows! The long, snail-crawling, almost eternal moments! And, through the days, weakness, lassitude, a drowsiness verging on elusive sleep, but starting awake at a nod; and the mingled hope and fear for the coming night! The Chinese torture of dripping water is no more tormenting than this torture of insomnia. Yet one must know the disease even faintly to realize the great boons of sleep and coma and non-existence.

Horrid and Gorgonian, snake-locked indeed, is the goddess Insomnia; but there is also another deity of Sleeplessness, gentle-faced and tender and full of wisdom and rest. How variant she from her torturing sister! To be awake and contented, watchful, hearkening, filled with peace and quietude, in the still, calm, everlasting night of space! There is neither disease

nor hardship in this; rather it is a thoughtful pause on our life's journey, a contemplative night snatched from hurrying existence, a rest by the way. Life flares, a fiery comet, and shortly whirls out. In the rush and roar and combustion, rare intervals of midnight wakefulness fall as benedictions indeed, for only then we have time to ourselves, time to stop and breathe and look about us and contemplate the eternity through which we are for a moment hurrying. In the daylight we belong to the world; sleep snatches us from and restores us to it. Our feet shuffle the pavements of life with what pleasures and agonies, — but always hurriedly, feverishly, as if the pursuing moment were armed to strike us down, — while we weave in and out through crowded humanity. This is the buzz and swarm and agitation of the gnat-cloud, hovering and dancing above a summer pond. But night is the pond itself, whence the darting and the turmoil breed and emerge and vanish again; always hushed, brooding, creative, always calm and dead under the flutter of life.

Night was a cathedral of rest, where I lay museful and sleepless. A cathedral built of the canopied stars and the stretched skies, of far-towering rock-ribbed walls of mountain, and aisles and long reaches of pines hidden in darkness, with an incense-laden air, drowsed by green perfumes, and at my feet the altar-eye with its pillared smoke. I threw off my blankets and put new logs on the dying fire; and in a moment an infantile tongue of flame licked up the rough bark, and fell, and struck again like a snake. Underneath the heavy dead wood, the bed of ashes glowed ruddier, and trembling sparks trooped through it. A log snapped, the red flames leaped suddenly under a fusil-

lade of reports, and hot sparks flew upward in a starry stream. About me the dusky night sharply shut, and grew black and closely environing, while a circle of flaring light pushed it back and held it, and built for me there in the heart of the darkness a walled cavern. Last, the pitch-pine stump that I had laid upon the logs caught and hissed and glared, and a white flaring light filled my unsubstantial realm and made of the walls of darkness sable hangings bellying and blowing about me.

This was my fire-built chapel in the cathedral of night, where I might muse, and by wordless emotion communicate with the gods. Here I might rest by the way. With the others of my kind, — with the flies, and the swallows and the human men, — I too had been hurrying I knew not where, feverishly fluttering and darting down the high-road, intent on doing something, on gaining somewhat, on achieving some unknown, upon reaching the yawning goal. I had had no time to look about me, no time to pause on the road, no time to stray away over the green slopes and gather pleasures, no time for anything but death. I had been hurrying down the way in anticipatory eagerness. I could not bear to stop in the pleasant pavilions of night until now, when favoring Sleeplessness brought me to the chapel by the way, — to the *caravanséra*i of darkness, the pilgrim-house of monastic night, — and I looked about me at the strange world that I had before never found time to view. So I saw for once the beautiful land of Faerie, through which the white, dust-laden road runs to my tomb. But here I could rest, for was not this, in very truth, the felicity to which I was hurrying?

This peaceful, dead, thoughtless, and majestic Night

is the goal of men and planets and suns and universes, and all are hurrying thither pell-mell, crowding and racing and eager to be received into darkness. This is the Alpha and Omega, the mother and the tomb. It was to this alone that I had been so strenuously tramping, and to which, whether I would or not, I must yet journey. And, sitting there in the sleepless silence, the goal seemed for the moment very desirable, and filled with an unimaginable felicitous peace. The drear burden of personality, the agony of life and of memory, here they will wither into darkness, I dreamed, and into the supreme happiness of Nirvana. In that hour, alone in the mountains, I fancied that I tasted an anticipatory draught of the nectar of death, I dreamed that I rested for a prophetic moment in the soul of the infinite, and, drunk with night, I found the haven inexpressibly desirable.

ENDICOTT AND I CONDUCT AN ORCHESTRA

WHEN two people conduct an orchestra there is plot material. If the two are knit by marriage ties, the plot thickens. Endicott and I conduct a family orchestra, he at the piano, I playing second violin. I know more about music than does Endicott; he is more musical than I. I keep the time; he has the temperament. Temperament is more noble than time, but time, I shall always insist, has its place, perhaps nowhere more appropriately than in an orchestra. He, at the piano, can dominate the situation more neatly than I. In my position among the strings, however, I can more readily organize a strike.

The rest of the 'pieces' are presided over by our

children, young people of inflexible spirit and chromatic moods. Sometimes we doubt whether we have our troupe under the rigid control which, as parents, we might expect to command. The conductivity of an orchestra, says our son Geoffrey, varies with the distance of the blood-relationship between artists and conductor. When the children were little, we held the pleasant theory that a family orchestra would draw us all close together, standing always as a symbol of our perfect harmony. That would be all right if the harmony would only go to suit us all equally at the same time. As it is, our little band, in which observers find so touching a picture of hearthside unity, suggests sometimes all the elements of guerrilla warfare.

The question most likely to strain diplomatic relations is the choice of what to play. This is complicated by the fact that we each judge music by a different norm. Geoffrey, for instance, begs us not to play anything where the cornet has to rest too much. He says that he cannot keep track of a rest of more than forty-seven measures, and be absolutely sure of coming in again at the right place. Every one admits that it is unfortunate when Geoffrey comes in at the wrong place. There is no smoothing over the astonishing effect of his premature trumpeting. 'You cannot,' says Geoffrey, 'do the dumb shuffle on the cornet.' For his sake, then, in looking over new music, we examine the cornet part for rests before we buy.

Endicott, a quorum in himself, agrees to anything except five sharps. Once seated upon the long piano bench, he is the genial patriarch at home. The girls, gracefully in league, object to extremes of any kind. They are our star performers, and must be humored at any cost. Knowing that the first violin and the

'cello are too valuable for us to lose, they exercise a cool and shameless power of veto at every turn. I myself admire extremes. My tastes are catholic, and my choices range all the way from the *Unfinished Symphony* to *The Swing*, by Sudds. The one thing in all the world that I really will not play is Schumann's *Warum*, a favorite with the first violin. This worthy composition leaves me undone for days. Its insane, insistent question slides through my mind, over and over. I will not play it. I will not think of it. I will not even explain my antipathy. I have hidden the music.

Probably the assembling of an orchestra is, to the audience, a conventional and colorless affair enough. Any players of chamber music, however, who have been confined to a space that housed as many other things as does our sitting-room, know better. After bringing in enough dining-room chairs to seat the players, and adjusting the cross-legged music-stands, we find ourselves a little short of room. We have as yet been unable to find a type of music-stand which will not trip up long-limbed cornetists off their guard. One evening when Geoffrey, threading his way to his seat, really did lose his balance, and plunged head-first into my work-basket, one foot in the fireplace and the other still entangled in Barbara's music-stand, affairs rose to a climax.

'Everybody more than a mile high please leave the room,' said Barbara, leaning over her 'cello and unweaving the legs of the stand from among her brother's feet. Any quotation from *Alice in Wonderland* is always calculated to infuriate the men of our family, and Endicott turned at once to his son's support.

'I don't see,' said Endicott, 'why Barbara does n't

arrange some little device for her music, just as Margaret does. Those tin spider-legs are really dangerous.'

Margaret's 'device' is at least not dangerous. She always pins her music to the tomato pin-cushion on the mantel, and stands aloof, compactly.

'There is no need of taking up all the room that Geoffrey takes,' said Barbara sweetly. 'I can hardly keep my bow from getting broken on his knee. No 'cellist ought to have to suit his bowing to the traffic.'

Once comfortably settled, we tune. That is one thing that we all will do. Ever since the children began to learn, when even the baby would bring his harmonica and say, 'Give me *M*,' they have always played to pitch. For this fact, Endicott is not responsible. In the midst of the most critical attuning of our strings, Endicott will cease his obvious business of giving us 'A,' and will break into little improvised arpeggios and fanfares, incorrigibly. Why pianists do this will never fully appear. After the best disciplinary training that accompanist ever had, Endicott still continues to 'practice his part' while the rest of us are tuning our fifths.

From my position in the orchestra, I can see the whole group reflected in the mirror over the fireplace. This helps me to conduct, and it also gives me pleasure. Barbara's 'cello is the most picturesque of our instruments. I find something very lovable about the long, vibrant strings, and the gracious curves of its worn, dark form. A 'cello is big enough so that you can embrace it and treat it as an equal, — big enough to satisfy your love for layer on layer of velvet tone. And Geoffrey is the most picturesque of all our players. There may be men who can play a cornet with a perfectly natural cast of countenance, concealing their

attention to a proper 'lip' under a nonchalant expression. There is nothing nonchalant about Geoffrey's lean cheek and beetling brows. His eyes are purposeful and all his hair erect. His incalculable legs are far astray, and the very angle of his elbows has a look of do or die. Margaret, on tiptoe, before her tomato pincushion, is perhaps not wholly at one with the group. One evening she turned briskly about, waved her violin like a brakeman's flag, and announced that somebody was out, and we 'd better begin at 'K.'

'It was old Meggie herself,' said Geoffrey fraternally. 'Everybody 's out of step but Meggie.'

Does every amateur orchestra, I wonder, when trying new music, interrupt itself sometimes for the tentative inquiry, 'Are we all at "J"?' Now and then we have an uneasy feeling that we all are *not* at 'J,' and a general assurance that we are lends confidence. Another amateur pleasure of ours is in taking liberties with repeat signs. If we like the passage extremely, we mind the repeat; if we are not acutely stirred, we take the second ending. With new music, we have no way of knowing beforehand what we shall especially admire. It chances, accordingly, that the cornet and the 'cello perhaps shout in the same breath, 'Repeat!' and 'Don't repeat!' respectively. At such moments, it is impossible to keep the orchestra together, even with two conductors. We usually stop and have a family consultation as to who is conducting this band, anyway.

Orders of the sort just mentioned, shouted into the middle of the music, are apt to sound blunt, not to say savage. When you have a violin beneath your chin, and a melody beneath your bow, you simply cannot converse in human tones, no matter how mild your

mood. There is a certain tenseness about your voice, a dictatorial crispness about your brief request, that is likely to sound domineering. Margaret and Geoffrey, one evening, almost became permanently estranged because Geoffrey in the midst of a lovely passage took the mouth-piece of his cornet from his lips long enough to roar, 'Three flats! Three flats!' for her guidance. Such stage directions have a brusque and startling tone, as if the speaker had stood all he could from you, up to the explosion point, and must now relieve his mind. Then too, there is of course a subtle excitement about the playing that approaches the danger-mark if anything happens to spoil the spell. Julia Ward Howe used to be all keyed up, she says, when she played with an orchestra; and so am I. Little things seem vital in such moods.

But I think that the part we shall all remember is something more difficult to describe. Sometimes, of a witching night, when we all are keyed for the music, and outside circumstances behave in normal fashion, there comes an experience worth all the years of scratchy scales that went before. We are in the midst of the Larghetto, in the *Second Symphony*, perhaps. I am not conducting. Neither is Endicott. Perhaps Beethoven prefers to conduct the Larghetto himself. And then, suddenly, as one sometimes on a journey becomes vividly aware of a breeze and blue distance, and firm hills beneath his feet, I really hear the chord that we are playing. It is no longer a measured flow of mingled sound, but distinct, exquisite, richly personal to me. There is the queer little rush of the accent that comes from the first violin when Margaret is really stirred; the 'cello's full response, vibrant, but soft with hidden masses of covered tone. I can feel

my own little second fiddle quivering beneath my bow. There is some curious connecting of the spirit in the playing of a chord. Again and again we find it. Probably these moments are what we live for, varied though our programmes always are. In our cabinet are certain ragged folios that we try not to play too often. They live in a promiscuous company: *Peer Gynt* and the *Edinburgh Quadrille;* Massenet and MacDowell; *The Red Mill;* Liszt and Bach; *The Toy Symphony* and Schumann's *Liebesgarten*—each of these has its time. Our only question is, What next?

At times, when we have been ambitious all the evening, and Geoffrey's lip is tired, we hunt up one of the songs arranged for voice and orchestra. The 'Shoogy Shoo' is one of these. Endicott then, with generous baritone, sings as he will, while the rest of us, with mutes astride our bridges, follow on. I shall not hear that song without the picture of the group in the mirror: Endicott upon the old red piano-bench, his hair silver under the lamp-light, his mood transformed. He is no longer the down-trodden accompanist, to whom a measure is restraint, but the untrammeled artist creating his own rhythms. What is a measure or two among friends? Then I watch the girls, now wholly at ease, their bows moving softly, their eyes upon their muted strings. Geoffrey listens, with his cornet on his knee.

After all, though music that we long to play is far beyond us, though we cannot always find all the parts, no matter how many times we search the piles; though the telephone rings, and the heater blows off steam—these all are only passing discords. Some sort of music is always ready, alluring: Mr. Strauss for times of enterprise, with all our reckless hearts; the 'Shoogy

Shoo' for moments when strings have snapped; ancient hymns at twilight of a Sunday evening, with Endicott to sing, and now and then a guest with a fiddle of his own. After such evenings as these are over, when the children are putting away the instruments and folding the stands, and I go about locking up the house for the night, I think that I do not greatly care who really conducts that orchestra — Endicott or I.

BORN OUT OF TIME

By a thousand indubitable signs I realize that the time has come for me to grumble. The world does not altogether suit me, and I begin to say, with a dubious shaking of the head, that it was not so when I was young. Now and then, to be sure, it crosses my mind that in those far-off days things were not altogether to my liking; but this occasional twinge of memory I conceal from the young of to-day. Possibly the spring hats help me to realize how many are the present ways of life which I cannot understand. Certainly they are so fashioned as to strike home to any rational mind a sense of change, and I often rub my eyes, wondering if it is real, this world of the grotesque in straw, and of equally choice novelties in thought and in habit. Wide-eyed, I marvel at my juniors, at their language, their ways of thinking, their attitude toward their elders, their taste in the matter of doing their hair, and in literature, both of which seem a bit sensational.

I was born out of time! Lover of time-honored ways, inheritor of homespun tastes in a world of shining, flimsy silk and sham velvet, — what place is

there for me in the modern life? The world has grown smart, and I am unable to achieve even an admiration for smartness, for I like quiet corners, and the sound of old-fashioned ideas discussed at length therein. The duties of eld press upon me, and I feel that upon my shoulders is laid the burden, not of prophecy, but of loud lamentation over the passing of the past. The whole emphasis on things seems to have changed from inner to outer values, from faith in the indubitable realities of the unseen, to a belief in that which can be merely seen and touched.

As I write this, a certain feeling of self-satisfaction enwraps me, and I revel in a fine oncoming sense of the all-too-great wisdom of age. It is no small satisfaction to feel that so many of my contemporaries are blinded by the shows of things, which my more penetrating glance pierces; but this joy is short-lived, for, thinking more deeply, I find in myself a limitation and a lack. With apprehension I realize how far I lag behind the race, and I begin to wonder if I do not belong to an already extinct species, like the trilobite, which probably had no use for fresh ideas. I dislike new inventions. Why did they devise the telephone? Communication between individuals of the human race was much too free-and-easy before. What chance has a man now to think? to develop? to learn to know himself and to be himself? What privacy is there? Whither may he retreat? He goes, perchance, into the innermost sanctuary of his being; the world is upon him in a motor-car. He retires to the holy of holies of himself; the telephone bell jangles; wireless messages pursue him to the uttermost parts of the sea. The telegraph boy, the uniformed messenger, lurk by the portal of the human soul,

waiting for it to come out so that they may pounce upon it.

My state of mind is foolish; I dare say my grandfather felt just this way about steam-cars and the doctrine of evolution, but I cannot help it. I resent new truths and new theories. It is no comfort to me that the leg of one animal will grow upon another, and, if one tenth of the stories of lingering agony be true, it is small comfort to either animal.

So I jog along in the old way, picking out the old footprints, living in a house with no telephone, and no approach for motor-cars. Imagine the lot of poor Job if his three friends had been able to arrive with present-day swiftness! Imagine how many more would have come if transit had been as rapid and as easy as in these days!

It is certainly most uncomfortable, this tendency of the human race to progress; I should like the world better if things stayed put. I had grown used to it, almost reconciled to it, and here it goes speeding like the wind away from me over leagues of roadway; fluttering into the air over my head, obscuring the infinite blue; and discovering in earth magic new elements that disturb the number of those I was taught years ago at a thoroughly good school. Perhaps each one of us in his own way lags behind his generation, and the habit is probably an old one. Doubtless the ichthyosaurus resented the way in which the dinosaur gained upon him, and I have no doubt that the Neanderthaler man, who with difficulty walked upright, — when you come to think of it we have not got much beyond that now, — made it extremely uncomfortable for whatever human thing it was that went before him on four legs.

Now that I remember, in the days of my youth my

elders used to feel precisely as I do now about the manners and the ideas of the young. Can it be that anything was really wrong *then?* The one unchanging thing in this world of change is the way of the grandparent in discovering the limitations of the grandchild, and yet, in spite of all misgivings, the youngsters seem to make some progress for the race as they trudge on into middle age. It is just conceivable that there is growth down under the fantastic appearances of to-day; outward signs do not always fully reveal the shaping powers within.

I fancy that it has been thus with every organism in the long chain of being since the first amœba started shrinkingly on its fluid way. A bit belated and a bit in advance, a bit ahead, a bit behind one's generation, — so we go stumbling on in the old fashion of any living creature seeking adjustment. Ah, if one could only find the secret plan in the seemingly illogical, irrational fashion in which life goes jogging on, dumb to the demand of the young that justice shall appear in all its workings, as to the prayer of the old that reason shall prevail; capable of working out splendid achievements by its droll methods of advance, retreat, concession, — going all ways at once. The shambling step of Mother Nature, after all, leads to glorious goals. Does each man feel a bit out of place in his generation? How, otherwise, could the ceaseless process go on? Endless becoming seems to be the principle on which this queer old universe is made; did anybody, or any living thing, ever exist which was not 'born out of time'?

PET ECONOMIES

WHAT is your pet economy? Mine is collar buttons. You see, I take you into my confidence before you have a chance to deny that you have such a thing. All the same, I 'll wager you have. I have yet to meet the individual, man or woman, who has not some pet economy which is cherished with the dogged unreason of early habit. Yes, I confess that mine — the principal one — is collar buttons. Think of it! Ten cents for a collar button! Or twenty-five for a better one; though that is only plated. I have a set, and one or two to spare; but the spare ones are a recent acquisition. One was a Christmas present — one of the most acceptable I ever had! It is a solid gold one. I always had wanted a solid gold collar button, and would like to have three or four more; but never have been able to bring myself to invest so much capital in that particular adjunct to the wardrobe. They are liable to be lost, and have a way of rolling under the bureau, when not observed, or being picked up by the servants. Several times I have been on the point of buying all the collar buttons I want; but the good resolution never happened to be coincident with the opportunity to purchase.

I find no such difficulty in regard to other incidents of apparel. I bought a flamboyant waistcoat the other day, the price of which would have stocked me in collar buttons for the rest of my natural life; and did not feel that it was an extravagance, either. But I shied at the collar-button tray in the haberdasher's, and hurried out, clutching tightly the change from a ten-dollar bill, as if fleeing from some awful temptation.

I have reasoned it out, and know that I could lose six gold collar buttons a year, and not have to cut down on my cigar allowance. And yet, — well, here I am in the condition of destitution to which I stand confessed.

I inflict these personalities upon the reader merely by way of illustration. It is not that my experience is unique. You have your pet economy, too, and will confess, at once, that you have had experiences very like mine. And you know friends whose pet economies seem to you extremely absurd. In fact, it is easier to discover these economies in our friends and acquaintances than in ourselves. Wealth is no eradicator for them. Indeed, it is among the wealthy that the most delightful specimens are to be found. I am reliably informed that one of Mr. Rockefeller's most cherished economies is golf balls. To lose a golf ball wrings his heart. Even an old hacked and dilapidated ball, gone in the tall grass, will weigh on his mind all through dinner, and his man will have orders to make a special search in the afternoon to see if it cannot be recovered. I have in mind a particular occasion, and a particular ball, and it is circumstantially related that, on the same afternoon, while still stewing about that little pellet of india rubber, he called his private secretary, and had him write a cheque subscribing five million dollars to a charitable purpose. Think of it! How many golf balls can be bought for a dollar? How many for a hundred dollars? A thousand? A million? A hundred million? If all Mr. Rockefeller's dollars were converted into golf balls, and he should spend the rest of his life knocking them into the tall grass, how old would he have to be before he became a pauper? If he lived the span of the Old Testament

patriarchs, and worked hard, I fancy he would have quite a pile before him when the Man with the Scythe called time.

String is one of the commonest of the pet economies. Have n't you a friend (I have) who insists, always and inevitably, upon stopping to untie the knots in order to save the string about the parcel? No matter what haste or impatience attends the opening; no matter that there is a great wad of just such strings on the nail in the pantry. Untied it must be, and the string saved. It might come handy. Now I stand here and denounce that practice as an irrational, illogical absurdity. I am emancipated from the string habit, and I know. There is nothing, except matches, so cheap in this day and age, as string. The investment of fifteen cents will stock a household with string enough, of assorted sizes, to last a year. Yes, for that amount you may revel in string — string without knots or tangles, and of interminable length. No fifteen-cent investment that I know of gives such ample and satisfactory returns in a year as the string investment. And, on the other hand, I know of no more laborious way to save fifteen cents a year than by picking the knots and cherishing the twine that comes with every package. But I need not argue the case. The string economy is no more rational than my collar-button, or Mr. Rockefeller's golf-ball, economy. It is just one of those pet economies of which I am speaking.

I know a lady of great wealth and fashion (or, to be more truthful, I know of her) whose pet economy is stationery. I had a note from her once written on that terribly cheap school-store paper folded and ruled in faint blue lines. I marveled, and made inquiries,

and learned that, though in all other respects she lived as became her wealth and station, she never could bring herself to pay for anything better in note paper. Her house is beautiful and perfect in its appointments; she has her carriages, her gowns, and her box at the opera. But when it comes to note paper, she feels that she must economize.

Another lady (this one I know more intimately) balks at the payment of excess baggage charges; and, as she is a great traveler, and always carries more weight than the rules of the railroads allow, this economy costs her a deal of money. I have in mind one instance when she paid her man's fare to New York, and gave him four dollars to bribe expressmen, not to mention the price of his dinner, and three dollars for an extra dray, in order to get out of paying excess charges which would not have exceeded two dollars and thirty cents. She is a generous woman, on the whole, and has an abundance of means; but excess baggage she deems the last straw in the burden of expense, and she will pay double the amount to get around it.

Other instances which occur to me are of the man who borrows his neighbor's newspaper to save one or two cents; and the one who insists on wearing the same tie for a year, despite the protests of his family; and the other who labors, and compromises with his conscience, to 'knock down' street-car fares. These are all men who are so far removed from penury that the cost of the articles in question is really no consideration. And in other relations of life they are generous and open-handed. For I am not alluding, in any part of this discussion, to the constitutionally or habitually close-fisted or stingy. These are merely pet economies.

I have thought a bit about the matter, and have concluded that pet economies are evidences of a defective education. Not general education — mind you — but education in the grand art of spending money. The science of economics, — the every-day economics which you and I and all of us are compelled to master, and to practice on a larger or smaller scale, — this science is divided into two chapters; one on How to acquire money, and the other on How to spend money. In the United States more attention is given to the first chapter than to the second. There are nine people who are successful in making money, to one who is successful in spending it. I do not have to explain to this intelligent audience that the mere getting rid of money is not success in the art of spending. To spend money as it should be spent requires intelligence and thought. It requires study — study directed to this one end. I was reminded of this not long ago when I was a guest in the house of my hospitable friend, Senator — but perhaps we had best name no names. He had bought some exquisite taste for his million-dollar mansion, but the shelves of his library offered two subscription sets of the World's Best Literature, and seventy-eight lineal feet of the official records of our late unpleasantness with the South. Poor man! I wanted to take some of his millions, and show him what to do with them. He knows much better than I do how to get them; but I could spend them — oh, ever so much better than he! I do not pretend to have mastered the art of spending, but I could give Mr. Rockefeller valuable pointers. I could show him how not to worry over a thirty-nine-cent golf ball. That 's where hereditary wealth gets its show of superiority; in the scramble to get money the art of spending has

not been so shamefully neglected. It is a rare thing to see the two acquirements evenly balanced. A man devotes a lifetime to the first chapter, and then, after his brain processes have begun to harden, and new lessons are not easy to master, he starts in on the second half of the volume.

In the family the 'women folks' are generally the ones to furnish whatever intelligence is directed to this chapter. Not being engrossed in money-getting, they have a little time and thought to devote to money-spending; and many a home has been made beautiful, and the seeming reflection of taste and culture, as the result of their efforts. But they are handicapped. If the Provider does not follow their enlightened researches, and approve and appreciate their discoveries, but judges only by the precepts of his chapter on acquisition, it is small wonder if they make but slow headway.

Pet economies are the unmastered details in the art of money-spending. The big things are obvious, and are taken in without much question. The big house, the rugs and furniture, the carriages and gowns, are the plain corollaries to a million. But in trifles, in the things which go to make up our less vigorous moments, the sway of the first chapter and its axioms is upon us, and we wrangle over the pennies, and deny ourselves, with the conscientiousness of a trust limiting the output.

Pet economies are limitations. They are telltales, tattling of a time when we were engrossed only in getting. They are sure evidences, also, of slovenly attention to the rudiments of the second chapter on finance.

I know; and some day I shall get a dozen solid gold ones.

TYPE II

REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS ON LIFE, HUMAN NATURE, CUSTOMS, AND EXPERIENCE

In ordinary conversation people rarely talk exclusively for any great length of time about each other. Very soon, and naturally, their conversation includes 'other people.' Man is by nature a social being, and is by necessity a member of a social group. Identity of human experience, community of interests, social interdependence, mortal frailty, and the routine of the business of living give men a genuine interest in each other and in the welfare of the social group. Other bonds of more immediate personal interest are sex, kinship, brotherhood, friendship, sympathy, curiosity, rivalry, admiration of achievement, jealousy, envy, and common business, social, and religious interests. Man is first, last, and always interested in man, his life and the problems of living, human progress, and all the various ethical, moral, and religious relations of life. So vitally do these subjects concern him that there are few of his utterances, oral or written, but bear, remotely at least, on one or more of them. Impersonal subjects may occasionally attract him, but, on the whole, their attraction is slight as compared with that which man and human affairs possess for him.

The familiar essayist, like the talker, finds his chief interest in man. What he may say of his fellow man may vary from the most trivial gossip relating to the

present fashion in eyebrows to a philosophical speculation concerning the origin of life and the ultimate destiny of the race. Since it is not the province of the familiar essay, however, to be a treatise in which logical deductions are made and conclusions reached, the writer usually avoids the more profound ethical, religious, and philosophical subjects. Many of the more serious questions of life interest him, it is true, but rarely does he indulge in more than a casual comment on such a subject in an attempt to direct attention to some personal significance that it has for him.

Whatever pertains to man, life, and human experience furnishes appropriate material for the writer and interesting matter for the reader of this type of the familiar essay. The essayist may record broadly his observations and reflections on the universe, the earth, life in all its variety and complexity, man in his varying moods, society and social conventions, ethical and philosophical problems, widespread heresies, false notions, and obvious self-deceptions of mankind. More frequently, however, he records a pleasing observation, a novel view, perhaps, of some universal human experience, world-old custom, or racial characteristic or tendency. He may propose a comfortable way of avoiding some social difficulty, give a hitherto unthought-of recipe for deriving pleasure from facing life and meeting its responsibilities, or suggest an avenue of escape from the disagreeable. Very frequently his essay is a genially satirical defiance of a convention or a criticism of convention-ruled humanity. It may be an exposition and a defense of a comfortable, though whimsical, philosophy of life. Sometimes it is life looked at from a radical, unorthodox point of view. The weaknesses, inconsistencies, and

foibles of human nature may come in for their share of humorous comment and mild satire at the hands of the author. Very often he is laughing with that class of persons whose eccentricities and incongruities amuse him, for he may include himself in the same group with them. Again, he may express regret at the limitations, or envy at the advantages, of a person or a social group of a class or age different from his own. In another mood, the author may playfully make the radical proposal that a certain type of persons who have incurred his displeasure be exiled or exterminated. He may lament the departure of society from the old order of things, and criticize what appear to him faddish innovations. The resemblance between man and the lower animals may furnish him an interesting subject. A contrast between the attitudes of youth and age toward life may be the topic of his comment. And, when he finds himself in a comfortable, domestic mood, he may entertain the reader with reflections on his home life, his family and family traits, or with musings concerning the future he dreams of for his first-born or, perhaps, his dream-children.

But in all familiar essays, the reader's interest depends not so much upon the subject as upon the personality of the author and his attitude toward his subject. The essayist's sense of humor and his realization of his own human kinship make him liberal and kindly disposed toward short-sighted, erring humanity. Rarely does he denounce or pronounce judgment seriously, and never does he preach except in a genial, humorous way. Consciousness of his own frailty usually makes him more tolerant of weakness, stupidity, and inconsistency in others. An interesting person-

ality, broadmindedness, sympathy, and a keen sense of humor are very necessary qualities of the writer of this type of the familiar essay. Mr. A. C. Benson, in enumerating the admirable characteristics of Thackeray as a familiar essayist, has emphasized these qualities. He says: 'His wonderful eye saw everything, and his large heart had room for everything and everybody. He lived, and enjoyed life, with an absolutely unimpaired and childlike zest; and his brave, simple, tender spirit endured to the end. Where other men are connoisseurs of fine flavors and delicate *nuances*, Thackeray was a connoisseur of the broadest and biggest things of life — its pathos, its absurdity, its courage, its loyalty. As the French proverb says, he is *bon comme le pain*. His handling of humanity is so liberal that he puts one out of conceit with all uneasy devices, all nice assignments of epithets. He writes as the jovial Zeus of the *Iliad* might have written about the combats and the loves of men, sympathizing with and experiencing every frailty, yet with a divine immunity from their penalties and shadows.'

STRAINING AT THE TETHER

On a grass-grown hillside, wearing the softest green in all the world, I sit in a mood of absolute content, for it is a goodly moment. Soft, spicy odors are in my nostrils, of cedar and of wild sage that grows profusely all about; far and near, the blue-green waters ripple in unending loveliness, and the air touches forehead and finger-tips with a new gentleness. Here I sit and think, for, though you cannot think hard in Bermuda, you cannot stop thinking. There is a bland inspiration in the air; your ideas are curiously mixed up with your sensations, and, as the latter constantly present new moments of charm, your mind, like your feet, keeps jogging on, not into new regions, but traveling in content old paths of thought; for the beaten tracks seem safe and sweet.

It is not a new idea that comes to me as I idly watch the goats browsing here and there below me on the hillside, but it comes with a new freshness, due, doubtless to the air, and the fragrances, and the little imperceptible sounds that enhance the quiet. Surely it is very odd that every goat in sight is straining at its tether! For the grass is fresh and toothsome, and none is fastened near a bare spot; there are no bare spots. This slope to the sea is a very goat paradise; no Theocritus in the vales of Sicily, in his most idyllic mood, could have dreamed a fairer. At left and right, at rare intervals, one sees the little houses with snow-white roofs where dwell colored folk who apparently fashion their roofs to match their souls, not their skins. In each lives a kindly master of some fortunate goat;

a soft-voiced woman, and gentle little brown-faced children who dance with the dancing kids. One can see in approaching these tethered animals that they are respectfully treated, as members of the family; they expect attention, and start a conversation as you approach; they seem to share the Bermudian sense of hospitality in wishing you to feel at home, and they give you a wholly pleasant feeling, not doctrinal but actual, of the brotherhood of men and goats.

Sitting in the warm sunshine, I watch them through half-closed eyes; that makes colors and outlines clearer, thoughts too, sometimes. Why should they do this thing? Every goat and goatlet in Bermuda is straining at its tether; with green and living grass close-by, — for the coffee-colored women in purple calico who come out to tie their respective goats have a genius for choosing the most fertile spots, — is straining after morsels just beyond reach, browner though they be. What, I wonder, is this instinct to escape, which drives us all on and on, over the long track, dominating alike the endless migration of the birds, the wandering of wild-beast herds, and the pioneering of human kind? Never, perhaps, have I been so free from it, and therefore so able to think about it, as I am at this moment, for I am minded to stay here forever, or as long as I can bear these spring-like bird notes mingled with the sound of plashing water on the delicate shore below. For heaven's sake, why can none of us 'stay put,' and rest content? Why, after choosing out of all the world a lot on which to build a little house in far New England, am I haunted and tormented thus by a vision of the lot just beyond? That has come to seem wholly desirable, with its eastern exposure, and its southerly slope for daffodils, while our own, which represented

the sum total of desirability when we found it hard to get, is full now of imperfections that urge us on and away. The next lot, the next lot, — so it will go on until I reach that small and ultimate bit of real estate which leaves the location of the next lot too uncertain for covetousness.

Here I go, — a frequent occupation in Bermuda, — to unwind the nearest goat, which has so entangled and tied itself up in its eager and leaping aspiration, — one might suggest parallels, — that it is well-nigh choked; then I go back to my green spot. And in the sunlit air I see pictures of those driven by the immemorial impulsion of the race toward the new, — far-off, forgotten, Asiatic hordes, with their shaggy ponies and their shaggy sons and daughters, forever 'stepping westward' on a 'wilder destiny,' driven they knew not whither, by they knew not what.

I see, what I shall never forget: a great alkali plain beyond the prairies, a dusty prairie schooner drawn by discouraged-looking horses, a discouraged man and woman looking vaguely out and on; and I recall a fact some one had told me, that the ground along this trail was sown thick with human bones. So is it along the trail of all human ideals!

Forever and forever come the immigrants to our great ports, father, mother, and children, with carpet-bags and embroidered jackets. All faces wear a look of stolid expectancy, as these close-packed masses move along on the everlasting trek.

None can say what it means, or foresee an end, for God, when he set before us the far horizon, constantly escaping, set also the longing for it within our hearts. It is only because of the innate impulse to escape one's present self that we are here at all; otherwise

our forbears had waited quite content without us. Forever a-pace, never arriving, has been the timeless past, and shall be the endless future.

> Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
> Or what 's a heaven for ?

Yes, but in the light of the fact that a man's reach always does exceed his grasp, what *is* a heaven for? Oddly enough, all the sons of earth, in spite of their life-experience of the necessity of perpetual motion, at least of the spirit, have conceived it as something static, fixed, final. Dreaming now of the walls of paradise, I see only rows upon rows of heads, with wistful eyes straining, longing for even the thistle patch, the thorn patch, any patch beyond.

And I, who could not be more absolutely contented in sense and in inmost soul than I am at this minute, think I see (a malediction on all aspiration, anyway!) a greener spot just beyond, where the juniper-grown slope stands out against water of a softer blue, so again I rise and trudge, with an insidious plan forming itself somewhere down in my subconscious self, where I cannot get at it to stifle it, to write something to-morrow which shall in some fashion voice this endless search of the spirit. It is only the goat impulse, at another stage of the game! No one else could express as well as Mr. Moody has done, the longing from which we may not escape: —

> Careless where our face is set
> Let us take the open way.
> What we are no tongue has told us: Errand-goers who forget?
> Soldiers heedless of their harry? Pilgrim people gone astray?
> We have heard a voice cry 'Wander!'
> That was all we heard it say.
> . . . . . .
> God, who gives the bird its anguish, maketh nothing manifest,
> But upon our lifted foreheads pours the boon of endless quest.

EAR-TRUMPETING WITH FRIAR JUNIPER

THIS little paper begins uninterestingly enough with the ear-trumpet, — and with me; but courage, reader! it is soon to blossom into Friar Juniper, and his words which were like 'flaming sparks.'

In the first place then, I did not like it, and it never for an instant occurred to me that anybody could like an ear-trumpet. Whenever I appeared with it in public, the consciousness of it rasped my pride all up and down on its very tenderest spots. It seemed to me that nothing that was in progress on stage or platform was of sufficient interest to distract attention from me and my trumpet. Though I never actually caught them at it, still I was sure I could *feel* people staring buttonholes of curiosity in my back. It looked like a small warming-pan, and made me look elderly and vague, and as though I should be certain to interrogate, 'Hey?' or 'What say?' if any one were ever brave enough to address me. 'But no one's likely to speak to you,' I told myself bitterly, 'for you know perfectly well that even people who lead forlorn hopes, or win Victoria Crosses before breakfast, shake like a leaf at the mere sight of an ear-trumpet.'

But all this was before I met Friar Juniper, and discovered how the trumpet might be worn with a difference.

Does every one know Friar Juniper? He was one of the most picturesque and engaging of all those first 'little brothers' who followed St. Francis, and this in spite of the fact that some of his exploits are open to criticism. One can hardly smile, for instance,

upon his method of obtaining a pig's trotter for a sick brother. The invalid certainly got the delicacy he craved, but the poor pig was left alive with only three trotters on which to trot. Neither can one approve Friar Juniper's habit of indiscriminate giving, because, unfortunately, he never paused to consider whether what he gave was his to give or not. Indeed one of the severest reprimands which he ever received was administered to him on the occasion of his 'plucking certain bells from the altar and giving them away for the love of God.'

Yet this very indiscretion serves to make manifest that particular characteristic which has so endeared him to me. 'Friar Juniper,' we are told, 'cared nothing for these words,' — that is, the scolding, — 'for he delighted in being put to shame.'

There you have it! He *delighted* in being put to shame. This is an absolute fact, the simple and magnificent truth. He was forever seeking ways in which to 'abase himself.' Here we read, 'how, to abase himself for the glory of God, Friar Juniper stripped himself of all save his breeches, and got himself to the public *piazza* to be jeered at'; and again, 'how to abase himself, Friar Juniper played at see-saw.' 'And for what,' perhaps you ask, 'was he such a fool?' Well, he was willing to be such a fool — nay, was glad to be — for the reason best expressed in his own simple words: 'Alack!' he cried. 'Wherefore are we unwilling to suffer a little shame if so be we may gain the blessed life?'

As I reflected on his delight in 'suffering a little shame,' it came to me on a wave of laughter, how Friar Juniper would have welcomed an ear-trumpet. What a glorious new way of abasing himself! He would

never have tried to dodge it, to turn his back upon it, to look as though it belonged to the next fellow. No indeed! he would have looked upon it as a truly Heaven-sent opportunity, and in sheer delight over the possibilities of pride-humbling and soul-strengthening which it offered, he would have seized upon it with all the eagerness of a happy child, and gone gloriously ear-trumpeting through the world. Indeed I experienced a sudden inward vision of this ecstatic brother dancing along the dusty highways, rough habit flying in the wind, ear-trumpet brandished, and he himself shouting forth a new and characteristic psalm.

'Praise the Lord with ear-trumpets, and with shawms,' he cried in my vision; 'praise Him upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the harp; now let all the ear-trumpets praise the Lord!' And therewith he blew such a blast of praise upon his own, that, to my fancy, it went ringing down through the ages, to teach a timid world for all time the splendors of an ear-trumpet, and the spiritual possibilities of physical defects.

O mad, fantastic, sublime, 'God-intoxicated' man! One is moved to cry with St. Francis, 'Would to God, my brethren, that I had a great forest of such Junipers!'

To rejoice in one's own confusion! Why, that sets one free from at least one half of the pin-pricks of the world! But Friar Juniper had other and greater gifts than this added unto him. We are told, for one thing, 'that the demons were not able to endure the purity of innocence and the profound humility of Friar Juniper . . . wherefore St. Francis, when demoniacs were brought unto him that he might heal them, if the devils departed not immediately at his command, was wont to say, "If thou dost not forthwith depart

from this creature, I will cause Friar Juniper to come against thee."'

It is doubtful if any one of us in our pink tissue-paper worlds (I speak of America; one imagines that Europe is not overburdened with the tissue-paper life at present) ever exercises himself in humility with sufficient robustness to be able to terrify so much as a kindergarten devil, to say nothing of those full-grown specimens that gave St. Francis trouble.

But besides Friar Juniper's power over devils, think of the gay courage of the man as well. In imminent danger of being hung, he was honestly amused, and spoke with 'merry countenance as if joking.' Faced by hanging it requires more than a sense of humor to be really merry. It requires, I think, a sense of God. His was that gayety which surpasses all other gayety; that mirth of the saints which has its well-spring in eternity, and therefore bubbles joyously forth in spite of all the troubling of the surface waters of time.

But most of all, think of the simple and sublime account of Friar Juniper at the deathbed of St. Clare. '"What is the news of God?" she asked him cheerfully, and he sat down beside her, and spoke flaming sparks of words.' It seems to me that there could scarcely be a more beautiful death than the flitting of St. Clare; nor a more beautiful gift from one human being to another than the news of God as presented to her by Friar Juniper.

Alas! I shall never rejoice sufficiently in being abased, nor ear-trumpet gloriously enough to have the shining privilege of speaking such words to a dying saint; but at least I have seen how splendidly an ear-trumpet might be worn, and I trust Heaven may forgive me my pale egotistical timidities, and grant that

when I come to die I may have one friend beside me who will take my hand, and speak to me of God in words like flaming sparks.

ON THE ROOF

Upon this tall pagoda's peak
My hand can nigh the stars enclose:
I dare not raise my voice to speak
For fear of startling God's repose.

So run the lines of an ancient Chinese poet, in the version of Giles of Cambridge; and I often think of them when I undo my door and step out on the ridge-pole of the sleeping city underneath the moon.

From my dooryard atop of the tallest apartment building I look down on a glittering plain of light. It is as though giant Roman candles had spilled white and yellow balls of incandescence like carnival blossoms along every thoroughfare. The starry heavens pale by comparison. The City Hall tower lifts its glittering tiara to mock the Corona Borealis. The planets are outgloried by carbon points and tungsten filaments. A ferry boat on the river is a galaxy of roving fires that dims the Pleiades.

Up and down the streets crawl the trolley cars, their retrorse antennæ hissing crescendo and decrescendo, their fender-jaws forever hungry, their Cyclopean dragon-eyes ablaze, — Fafnirs submissive to the rails, and to sharp voices that forever cry, 'Step lively!' Even up here one is poignantly aware of them, for at the intersection of the cross-lines, they seem to squat on their truck-haunches for the balky fraction of a second, and then, in two crashes, they and their eight wheels are over, and they go roaring

on their rigid steel pathway where once the Indian moccasins slid noiselessly along the mossy runnels of the forest glades. How would Beowulf's or St. George's dragon have felt, to depend on a distant power-house for a soul? Verily 'A groove is akin to a grave'; behemoth and leviathan themselves could not survive the indignity of harnessed servitude to a rapid-transit system.

The glimmer of the dusk veils the squares and streets with a suffusion of amethystine light, like the purple of cold snow in the lap of the hills late on a winter afternoon. Then it is that grim utilitarian office-buildings are suddenly transformed, as at the touch of a necromancer's wand, into palaces of fairy-land, magnificent with fire, each window a plate of beaten gold, shining like the back of a Stradivarius violin. It is hard to tell which window holds the reflex of the sundown, and which a lighted lamp.

A little yellow bird came flying to my window the other night, sentient of the flowers within and the radiance and the warmth, furious because it could not pierce the glass like water. I felt as though I were the keeper of a lighthouse in a storm, against whose lantern sea-birds beat and scream and die; but my bird winged away ere I could bring my mind and hand to the window to let that mad, fleet whirring come in out of the night. I thought of the ancient explanation Caedmon gave of the soul of a man, when he said to the king that it was as if, as they sat at meat with the thanes and the aldermen, a white bird entered the room, flying from the dark and out into the dark again. Then of the passage in Pater's *Marius*, where the lad's mother tells him that his soul is a little white bird which he must carry in his bosom across

a crowded market-place. But my soul went away from me that night, it would seem, and has not come back to me again.

By day I can see the hats and muffs, — but not the faces, — the perambulators and the nursemaids of coddled children in the square below. The stone walks among the leafless trees are picked out with errant blurs of color, a peripatetic flower-garden, as though geraniums should whimsically walk away from their own leaves. Here an old man crawls at a snail's pace, — to feed a squirrel, perhaps, which I cannot see, — and there, direct and forcible as a steam-engine, goes a woman in whose hammering, get-there gait is revealed a claimant of the suffrage. But generally persons are seen only as the shreds and flying tassels of a crowd; and the talk of voices is replaced by the talk of the town.

That talk of the town is a wonderful thing. It may fall away to a restless, fitful murmur in the middle of the night, but it goes on unceasingly. The honk of the motor-car is its punctuation-mark, and in its indistinguishable vast uproar blend the accents of nearly two million human beings, to say nothing of the wild laughters and tribulations of lesser animals, with an eye or a tongue to the moon that rules more tides than those of the sea.

For there be many voices, but one Voice.

I love particularly the other-worldliness my station in space sometimes assumes, when a thick fog or a cloud-stratum leaves me pendent like Mahomet's coffin, even though I know there is a telephone in my closet and I can throw a verbal anchor down to the earth if I please. Miracles, near and far, are wrought

by great black striations that shoot in like Zeppelins; sometimes these phantasmagoria are colored light green, like the under side of 'little leaves new-born,' and sometimes they are black as a fox's fur can be, and thicker still. When a storm comes, I am all wrapped up in clouds and singing winds, and then it is best of all, and I wonder why most people care to live so near the ground. It is nice to know that here and there folk who cast far into the future are painting across roof-tops horizontal advertisements, that they may be aeroplanely read; and I have seen a grand stand built on an office-building's top to witness the horrendous feats of an aviator. Before long we of the housetop will, like the skylark, spurn the ground altogether, and using the skylights for our front doors, will find the Attic philosopher come into his kingdom at last. All the trees will be roof-trees, and all the gardens, roof-gardens. As I look round me now on other roofs, I can see awnings, and even children's sand-piles, and steamer-chairs, and hammocks, and various canvased arrangements for outdoor sleep.

Even the cats have a roof-garden in a refuge whereof I am aware, and schools have netted enclosures for basket-ball playing as well as for mittened and tippeted recitation. How good is all this migration roofward, while space is at a premium on the ground! We revert to the archaic wisdom of Babylon, the current history of Tibet and the Himalayan peasants, the practice of our western Indians upon their mesas, the Chinese on their terraces, who use their housetops underfoot as well as overhead. One does not realize what a vast unpopulated, unutilized area lies but a few feet above the teeming metropolis, till one looks down upon one hundred and thirty

square miles of housetops from above. Then one thinks better than ever of the civil engineering of Semiramis, who, pining for green turf and plashing fountains in place of the sun-baked clay, built a secondary heaven that was some consolation for the grand ruin of Babel.

OLD-CLOTHES SENSATIONS

PEOPLE whom penury has never compelled in infancy or adolescence to wear other people's clothes have missed a valuable lesson in social sympathy. In our journey from the period when we first strutted thoughtlessly in our Cousin Charles's cast-off coat, on to the time when we resented its misfit, and thence to that latest and best day when we could bestow our own discarded jacket on poor little Cousin Billy, we have successively experienced all the gradations of soul between pauper and philanthropist. Most of us are fortunate enough to put away other people's clothes when we put away the rest of childhood's indignities; but our early experiences should make us thoughtful of those who have no such luck, who seem ordained from birth to be all the world's poor relations. In gift-clothes there is something peculiarly heart-searching both for giver and recipient.

This delicacy inherent in the present of cast-off suit or frock is due perhaps to the subtle clinging of the giver's self to the serge or silk. It is a strong man who feels that he is himself in another man's old coat. If an individuality is fine enough to be worth retaining, it is likely to be fine enough to disappear utterly beneath the weight of another man's shoulders upon one's own. Most of us would rather have our

creeds chosen for us than our clothes. Most of us would rather select our own tatters than have another's cast-off splendors thrust upon us. It is no light achievement, the living up to and into other people's clothes. Clothes acquire so much personality from their first wearer, — adjust themselves to the swell of the chest, the quirk of the elbow, the hitch in the hip-joint, — that the first wearer always wears them, no matter how many times they may be given away. He is always felt to be inside, so that the second wearer's ego is constantly bruised by the pressure resulting from two gentlemen occupying the same waistcoat.

Middle children are to be pitied for being condemned to be constantly made over out of the luckier eldest's outgrown raiment. How can Tommy be sure he is Tommy, when he is always walking around in Johnny's shoes? Or Polly, grown to girlhood, ever find her own heart, when all her life it has beaten under Anna's pinafore?

The evil is still worse when the garments come from outside the family, for one may readily accept from blood-kin bounty that which, bestowed by a stranger, would arouse a corroding resentment. This is because one can always revenge one's self on one's relatives for an abasement of gratitude by means of self-respecting kicks and pinches. A growing soul may safely wear his big brother's ulster, but no one else's; for there are germs in other people's clothes, — the big bad yellow bacilli of covetousness. People give you their old clothes because they have new ones, and this fact is hard to forgive.

There may, of course, exist mitigating circumstances that often serve to solace or remove this basic

resentment. To receive gown or hat or boots direct from the donor is degrading, but in proportion as they come to us through a lengthening chain of transferring hands the indignity fades out, the previous wearer's personality becomes less insistent; until, when identification is an impossibility, we may even take pleasure in conjecturing who may have previously occupied our pockets, may even feel the pull of real friendliness toward the unknown heart that beat beneath the warm woolen bosom presented to us.

Further, the potential bitterness of the recipient is dependent on the stage of his racial development and the color of his skin. The Ethiopian prefers old clothes to new. The black cook would rather have her mistresses's cast-off frock than a new one, and the cook is therein canny. She trusts the correctness of the costume that her lady has chosen for herself, but distrusts the selection the lady might make for her maid. On assuming the white woman's clothes, the black woman feels that she succeeds also to the white woman's dignity. The duskier race stands at the same point of evolution with the child who falls upon the box of cast-off finery and who straightway struts about therein without thought of his own discarded independence.

I may be perceived to write from the point of view of one clothed in childhood out of the missionary box. Those first old clothes received were donned with gloating and glory; but later, in my teens, — that period so strangely composed for all of us out of spiritual shabbiness and spiritual splendor, — sensations toward the cast-off became uneasy, uncomfortable, at last unbearable. The sprouting personality resisted the impact of that other personality who had first

worn my garments. I wanted raiment all my own, dully at first, then fiercely.

No one who has passed from a previous condition of servitude to the dignity of his own earnings will ever forget the pride of his first self-bought clothes. At last one is one's self and belongs not to another man's coat, or another woman's gown. It is a period of expansion, of pride: when one's clothes are altogether one's own, one's pauper days are done. But it is best for sympathy not to forget them, not only for the sake of the pauper, but for the sake of the plutocrat we are on the verge of becoming; for our sensations in regard to old clothes are about to enter a new phase; we are about to undergo the ordeal of being ourselves the donors of our own old clothes.

It was not alone for the new coat's intrinsic sake that we desired it; we coveted still more the experience of giving it away when we were done with it. There is no more soul-warming sensation than that of giving away something that you no longer want. The pain of a recipient's feelings on receiving a thing which you can afford to give away, but which he himself cannot afford to buy, is exactly balanced by your pride in presenting him with something that you can't use.

The best way to get rid of the pauper spirit is to pauperize some one else. This is cynical philanthropy, but veracious psychology. It follows that the best way to restore a pauper's self-respect is to present him with some old clothes to give to some one still poorer; for clothes are, above all gifts, a supreme test of character. It was the custom of epics to represent the king as bestowing upon his guest-friends gifts of clothes, but they were never old clothes. If you could

picture some Homeric monarch in the act of giving away his worn-out raiment, in that moment you would see his kingliness dwindle.

The man who can receive another man's old clothes without thereby losing his self-respect is fit to be a prince among paupers, but the man who can give another man his old clothes without wounding that man's self-respect is fit to be the king of all philanthropists.

THE FIRST HERITAGE

My wood-fire purrs and whispers. The Big Ben clock ticks faithfully on the mantel; the Little Ben dog snores a doggie snore on the rug. The baby, in her white bassinet in the corner, stirs and makes funny sleepy noises.

The room is gay with sunshine, and comforting to the soul with the books and pictures beloved of a lifetime. Darning stockings by the fire, I glance up now and then, and let my eyes be pleased and puzzled by the queer blue Scripture tiles around the fireplace.

Some day, when the baby is bigger, she will sit in my lap with her feet sticking out to the good heat, and I will hug her, and tell her, —

'That funny man up in the tree is Zaccheus. And here is the poor Prodigal Son coming home again. Those are the kind ravens who fed Elijah in the dry wilderness; and that man there is ——'; and doubtless, if she lives to be a hundred, Zaccheus and the Prodigal and the Prophet will appear to her drawn in coarse blue flowing lines, medallioned about a flickering birch-fire.

I wonder what else of this room and this house she will take with her, out across the years. She is very

little now — hardly big enough to lift her head like a strong little turtle, to smile a broad square smile with a dimple at each corner, and to squeal out with inconsequent joy. But no doubt she has already begun to store that brown silken head, bumping my cheek so nonchalantly at times, with the stock-in-trade of all her future. Little Ben's terrible Airedale bark will be the gentle 'Bow-wow' of her first patter; and Big Ben is destined some day to clang and bang her out of dozy delights, crying 'School!' to the cold gray winter dawn.

The little bluebirds of my chintzy curtains will sing and fly for her like the first gay troubadours of the fence-posts. The hour-glass, up beside Big Ben, waits for her small hand to reach and turn it, while she wonders at the red sand slipping in its chase on old Time's heels. Perhaps she will carry away with her a strange vision: dark, windy cypresses, deathly rock-chambers, curdling water and fatal barque, from the Böcklin 'Isle of Death,' over there; or Parrish's dreamy boy, blowing opal bubbles and pearly castles in the air, or swinging out of his black pine tree into the unbounded blue like an exulting arrow of youth, will make her little secret spirit dance and sing.

Downstairs, the piano, with a crack in its back and a rattle in its throat, seems asking that she should steal new music from it. The wide hearth has more than Scriptural bed-time joys to teach her. Pop-corn, and sparks running to Sunday-School, and dwarfs' forges and witches' caldrons and burning ships! Grimm and Andersen and Howard Pyle, now perched on the highest shelves, will come down to her desire, and the theology and history will go up, lighter than vanity, before many years. Will she keep house between her

father's feet, there in the dark palatial space under the big desk? Will she shudder when she finds that it is a gray half-skull that holds her father's pipes so jauntily, and learn to watch the crystals of the ancient candlesticks for rainbow charms, each sunny morning?

Out in the garden the poppies flame, and the hollyhocks and larkspur sway. She will remember, some day, that she held pink poppy petals high against the blue, blue sky, and saw how deep a bee can burrow in a crimson hollyhock. And before that, there will be such dandelions on the lawn; such grasshoppers to jump after; such busy ants, toiling about their little sand-huts on the crooked red-brick walk!

She will have many happy things to remember, I think.

But what will she remember best of me, who sit here dreaming into her life the things that many years have wrought into mine? Perhaps it will be only that I wore a white dress on warm summer days; or that my hair had such and such a twist; or that I sat by the fire and darned many stockings, sometimes. Perhaps it will prove that I am just a picture in her swiftly turning picture-book: no more.

She is very little, there in the white bassinet. She starts on her long journey most quietly. But the house, the garden, the meadows, and the roads seem waiting for the stirring of her feet. I am waiting too; and some day the memory of me may be to her no keener than that of the red fire, the blue tiles, the poppies.

It does not trouble me to think that, though it has a sad empty look as I write it. Why should it trouble me?—Once I too lay in a basket in a corner, and made sleepy noises under a blue-edged shawl; once I

watched a wood-fire dance, safe-hugged and rocked in quiet arms.

She will remember of this first heritage even what I have remembered. May it but prove as dear, out across her years!

RETURNING

THE spirit of returning is one of the most profoundly beautiful influences that help to mould the wayward life of man. Perhaps it is even the most beautiful, the most deeply significant. The very waywardness may be its work, since only out of departure can any return come to pass, since strife and restlessness alone can bring forth rest.

The philosophers say that God projected creation away from Himself in order that it might hunger and thirst to get back to Him; and certainly the whole course of our human life bears out this theory. We are born with a cry on our lips, we grow up blindly, rebelliously, our entire development is a process of effort and pain; paradoxically, the more intelligently we enjoy things, the more they sting and fret us. Why? Because our finiteness oppresses us, our separation from the serene, competent Whole. We feel that all our experience is boundless, fathomless; and we have only a little dangling plummet with which to sound it. No wonder we long after the infinite capacity which seems to be our birthright but which our mortal destiny has inexplicably forfeited.

We do not always realize this with our human reason, although our instinctive preferences confess it accurately. From high to low and low to high in the range of experience, there are few of us who do not

prefer the systole of things to the diastole. What an effort we have to make to resist the law of gravitation, and how comfortable is the inevitable giving over of the attempt and the serene descent of the hill! Still more commonplace is the every-day truth that most of us like to go to bed and hate to get up. There is a significance in the rapture with which we sink into the arms of sleep, letting ourselves go, entirely abandoning ourselves. And equally full of meaning is the reluctance with which we pull ourselves back in the morning, gathering, piecing ourselves together, taking up our partial ways.

Do we not make all our journeys largely that we may know the bliss of coming home again? We set forth blithely enough (the need of change is inherent in all humanity), and for a while we feel no regret for the familiarity which we have left behind us. We glory and rejoice in the new, refreshing our eyes and hearts. But by and by comes the turn, the hesitating, pausing, and the slow looking back. The glory around us fades as if a cloud had come over the sun; and behind us the glow rests on the distant spot from which we set forth. Ah! then, according to our dispositions, we run or we saunter back, devouring the miles in our eagerness or protracting the pleasure that we may taste it fully. And when once again we stand on the thresholds of our quiet, familiar homes, was there any gladness of going forth to compare with this flooding bliss of return? We are back where we belong. We have tasted novelty and have found it good, chiefly as a spice to quicken the familiar. We have filled our hands; we would empty them now, and fold them, and yield them into the hands of the spirit of peace. We have come unto our own again, and our own has received us.

The grandeur of autumn has its source in this idea of return. The spring and the early summer are restless, quick and vivid, and thrilling with life, but unsatisfying. They are lavish in promises, half of which can never be fulfilled and the other half of which disappoint more than they gratify. They are contagiously vigorous, enlisting all in the energy of their onward march. Way! Way! for the universe. It is at last going to declare itself, is going to make its goal. But after the full tide is reached in the most commonplace and uninteresting month of the year, after July has bored us with its heavy, monotonous foliage and its sultry days, after we are satiated with progress, then comes the blessed turn. August lays slow fingers of peace upon the year. Never mind; come back. Perhaps it was not quite worth while, all this mighty stress and effort; perhaps the achievement was rather negligible. Coming back is always worth while, is always worth the most futile departure. Come back, come back, come back! All shall thus be well! Blessed August! It is as full of hope and healing as July is heavy with dissatisfaction. Come back? Indeed, we come.

But the return is gradual. Through weeks and months it feels its slow, sure, quiet way. It knows no relapses; with the coming of August, the stress has once for all gone out of the year. There is never any doubt which way the tide is facing. But there is an untroubled delay, a happy lingering. Returning is too dear a process to be wasted. Little by little, through the strong, serene days of September, the fingers of our peace reach after us and gather us. Sometimes, for very joy of our capture, we turn our faces and pretend to look the other way; September has some seemingly aggressive and independent moods. But

never is there any deflection of our footsteps, any resistance to the blessed power that has laid hold upon our lives. We come, we come.

The whole symbolic earth expresses the spirit of its autumn peace. The mown meadows lie content, vibrant with the drowsy song of grasshoppers and crickets; the hills dream round the valley, veiled in sun-woven mists; the dim blue sky is full of slow, vague clouds. But the woods are the best home, nay, the very temple of the returning bliss. More and more silent they grow, as the days draw onward. Even the hermit thrush, their priest, ceases to chant in them; their shadows passively yield up the little flitting presences which filled them with subdued animation during the early summer. They become graver, more austere and gentle.

With the first frosts, the outermost trees begin the great change that makes their order the prophets of the autumn. They dip their fingers in the red sunrise. Little by little the glory spreads, stealing inward in waves of crimson and gold. One who worships the woods can then not afford to leave them a day unvisited, the phases of their transfiguration are so incessantly wonderful. They grow august and holy. A golden light floods them — not from the sun, but from their own being, like the face of a saint. Deep within them, the ferns, transmuted to pale spirits, bow in frail ghostly ranks. There is no sound. The very wind forbears. The return would seem to be almost consummated.

But it is the falling of the leaves that sets the seal upon the beautiful, significant process. There is no more thrilling, solemn sight in all the range of nature. In the beginning, a few at a time, they come drifting,

circling downward, utterly careless and unobtrusive, yet deeply purposeful. With a sigh they seek the warm, pungent earth which is to each one of them the ultimate breast of God. Then more and more of them come. By and by, the dim, shining temple is full of the soft stir of their passing — frail shapes, crossing the motionless lines of the trees, floating athwart the shadows, animating the inner gloom. Their faint, sighing whisper voices the silence of the forest more poignantly than the hymns of the hermit thrush. If the wind still forbears, they fall slowly, freeing themselves of their own accord, knowing the uttermost joy of self-abandonment. Multitudes fall together, however, going hand in hand to their common end. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. They know what they want, and they take it together, deeply satisfied.

Death: it is just that. The word that we all combine to avoid, disparage, translate; yet surely one of the most beautiful words in our language. It is death that the leaves seek, the brook seeks, the year seeks, death that we all seek together. This is not unnatural in us; it is the most profoundly natural thing we do. We are partial creatures, temporarily blinded to all but fleeting, uncertain glimpses of reality; of course we long for the clear vision which we hope that the dissolution of our teasing senses will give. Heirs of infinity, inexplicably hemmed in now on every side, we inevitably wish that we might come of age. We cannot, we would not hasten the coming, for the process itself is very good; but every step that lessens the distance deepens our content.

> The day becomes more solemn and serene,
> Now noon is past.

That is a song of returning. Poetry is full of such songs, and so is the common speech of every day. If we listen, we shall hear the burden everywhere the same.

Oh, dear, dim Goal, which incites in us such longing, the only longing that is ever satisfied, — what wilt thou do with us when we find thee? Allow us to rest in thy freedom and know thy immensity, or send us forth again to work among the shows of things? That is no concern of ours, that is thy business, we must leave it to thee. Our concern is to find thee now, find thee, find thee. For surely we have lost thee, and surely we are thine.

FOOLS

'THE longer I live,' said my friend the Professor thoughtfully, 'the more I hate a fool.'

Now in most things the Professor and I are pleasantly in accord; but, as he spoke that damning sentence, I knew that the subject, further pursued, would breed alienation between us, and I turned the discourse into other channels. I smiled to myself as I felt the resemblance of my instinctive state of mind to the attitude of a mother hen, hustling all her chickens behind her out of the way of the prowling cat, anxious, perturbed, defensive. For it is my excellent fortune to rank not a few of the class obnoxious to the Professor among my cherished friends. They are the salt of the earth to me. I could not relinquish one of them, nor has one of them reformed.

It may be a somewhat delicate matter to determine in just what high folly consists. There are fools and fools, and from the latter I avert my eyes as sadly

and speedily as the Professor. But the standards shift so enormously that it is perhaps not going too far to say that every man is a fool to someone and a wise man to someone else. Which lets us all in to the happy band, if we view the matter broadly.

However, for the sake of convenience, that a definition may be approximated, it is always possible to appeal to a shadowy sort of public tribunal which fluctuates like the waves of the sea, but which, again like the sea, remains pretty well limited. With this tribunal I should probably agree in stating that the chief mark of a fool is indifference to results. That is so disconcerting and childish in him! It is a severely logical world — cause and result, cause and result; we should reason our actions well. But the fool cares only about the cause. Glorious, beautiful, soul-filling thing! he rushes at it with arms held wide, seizes it, launches it — whither away? Perhaps it is fortunate for our peace that, for the most part, a fool throws far, having a mighty impulse in him; so that his cause goes clean over the edge of the decorous world and apparently comes to nothing. But who shall say what alarming results take place among the stars?

I once knew a joyous, refreshing creature — like the sun was the sudden entrance of him — who spent himself in translating books which no one wanted to read, in devising schemes to assist a race which declined to be assisted, in pouring his life in the sand.

'Never mind,' he would assure me brightly, when I weakly fell so far from the grace of our true understanding as to remonstrate with him. 'I can't do anything else, you know, for these things seem important to me. If people don't care for them now, they will; I can always wait.'

Another impetuous soul was fain of extravagant hero-worship. I watched his career with an interest which was partly impersonal, but which owed something also to my own ends. For I found that he furnished me a sure test of the measure of greatness. Some of his heroes — the most, alas! — fled from his praises precipitately. They did not understand him; they thought him about to swallow them up; they beat him off with both hands. Now a hero who cannot apprehend love and accept it simply and frankly lacks the true magnanimity; so it appears. In the end, as a matter of fact, the laugh was always on the heroes; for their impulsive admirer had no intention of swallowing up; he would have choked with shame at the thought. It was simply natural for him to love, and, loving, to mention the fact. His love was thrown back in his face twenty times to my certain knowledge, to my burning indignation too; but his heart remained sweet and warm through it all, and he went on loving. Who was the hero here? Who the fool? One may well pause and consider.

Another certain trait of a fool is his zest in living. This is so marked that the wonder is, considering how keen we all are in the quest for happiness, that we do not at once adopt the motley as a universal garb. I suppose our dignity stands in the way. It would doubtless be going too far to say that all optimists are fools; but there is certainly hardly a fool who is not an optimist. They see the world *couleur de rose*, these children. If evil exists, it is only a chance to prove the hearts and the hands of men; they have at it courageously. Given a problem before which wise men have pondered and waited long, to determine the safest line of approach: up comes the fool along any

line which he happens to occupy at the moment, suddenly running, his head well down, and — pouf! whack! presto! finish! the problem has disappeared. The amazed discomfiture of the wise men at the unwarranted consummation is not the least engaging part of the whole pleasant spectacle.

One of the fool's most lovable qualities is his entire willingness to appear ridiculous. That takes greatness of nature. To do absurd things in the calm understanding that they are absurd (though probably glimpsing divinity, too, on their cloudy side, which is larger), and then to abide the consequences of laughter and derision — excellent fool! he puts to shame the solemn pride of wisdom. The most beloved fool I know turns on himself and laughs at himself with such an *abandon* of cheerful mirth that one might think his quixotic achievements were undertaken quite for the joke — if one had not first seen deeper.

They are all eternally young and glad; of that we may be certain. There was never an 'old fool' in the world, though the phrase is common enough. I met a typical member once of the delightful order. His folly I recognized at once, and rejoiced in it and warmed myself at it through the whole of a happy evening. But when I was questioned about his age, I was suddenly at a loss. I had talked with him as with one of my years; perhaps now, however, thinking about it, he had seemed a little older. 'Forty?' I hazarded doubtfully. My hostess clapped her hands and laughed in a merry triumph. 'Sixty-nine!' she informed me. It is a wonderful thing to hold the secret of freshness thus. Strange! strange! that we are not all fools, when the profit is so great.

THE WISDOM OF FOOLISHNESS

HAS enough been said about the foolishness of friendship, — not the foolishness of being friends, but the wisdom of being sometimes foolish friends? To Maeterlinck's saying that we cannot know each other until we dare to be silent together, one would add, and to be foolish together; for many of us hoard as gold the remembered nonsense that seemed to test our fitness for the twilight hour when hearts were uncovered and life plumbed to the depths. It is with the companion of the hour that we talk of the world, of heaven, perhaps even of ourselves; but with our friend we may be silent or absurd, with safety and profit to both; and then in the moment of self-revelation, he helps us to see further, to judge more sanely, to know more surely, than all the masters of intellect could do.

The little jokes of a friendship are treasured through the years, and give it a vocabulary of its own. A word of flying allusion, and the ludicrous scene of a distant time comes back to give us new delight; certain cherished stories have become familiar symbols for the happenings of a duller day; when we should do some thankless task, we say we must go nutting; or, when gay, we mention Truro Corners. So, to the uninitiated, we babble of nothing; but we, the elect, know more precisely what is meant than finest rhetoric could tell us, and dear old stories gather moss through the years until they mean not only themselves, but all that train of sunny days where they have had a part.

It is a question whether a friend is entirely beloved unless we can 'let ourselves go' with him; we demand of him the intimacy of relaxation; our very soul rebels against being kept ceaselessly to any pitch,

no matter how clear and sonorous the tone may be. We may admire his wit and intellectual power, we may lean upon his sympathy and sound judgment; yet it is his moment of giving way to unconsidered mirth, his sudden drop to sheer nonsense, that endears him to us. But our taste in fun must match. If your jest be dull to me, if mine be coarse to you, there is the sign-post which marks a dangerous road. And perhaps we shall find it useless to patch up a comradeship for the sake of this quality or that; for whether we will or no, we must some time travel by diverging paths where labor would be wasted trying to make a cross-cut.

And so it may all come back to the importance of foolishness as a test, — happy augury, perhaps, that in heaven the pure pleasure of companionship shall endure beyond the interchange of minds, — and it is as if some attribute of the subconscious creature marked the play of temperament that proves us kin. For mere intellect, the output of our perishable brains, is less than nothing if ourselves be not even cousins-german. And what havoc we may make when a close relationship is founded chiefly upon a likeness of intellectual tastes! One day the bound is crossed to the spirit's domain, when the chance is that warring temperaments wreck the light fabric, and we go forth cursing the brains that tricked us into hailing an alien as our own.

With this friend we may be serious, with another gay; one ponders upon life and art, while the other, charming playmate of an hour, is full of quip and jest. But the ideal friend must have a light touch and a stride that mates with ours, and it is his life and ours, viewed by the light of universal day, which bespeaks

his interest. And then perhaps a pretty atmosphere of fun creates a glamour where the best of us may bloom. By the flash of his wit, he shows us our highest reach, and in the mild warmth of his humor, where there can be no blight of self-appraising, we grow and thrive. So it may not be all idleness, but like the sparkle of tiny waves on a sunny day it marks the steady progress of the tide.

There should be a tolerance in friendship that gives us room, a very lack of demanding that we be this or that which makes it natural to do our prettiest. And when we know we have been cowards, when we know we have gone down a step or two, to be met by some gentle jest instead of the rebuke we had richly earned melts our ready defiance, and we are eager to climb again to that place near him which we had left. He has not told us that we have fallen below his hope, he would not affront friendship by anything so crude as spoken forgiveness; but in that exquisite ignoring of the hurt, we recognize our chance. We know in the depths we are at one; but diversity of fancy, the light sparring of contending wit, may weave a fabric that gives color to our day, and it is often the whimsical side of an affection which makes its charm. Here is the pleasant garden which lies about the solid structure of our friendship, where we may play with poppy dolls and burdock cradles, while we know the sheltering roof is near when we would have the quiet of shaded rooms or refuge from the storm.

WAGGLING

ONE of my friends says, 'Don't you like to have people make a pleasant, gentle hullabalooing over you sometimes?'

I know what she means, and I do like it. Only in my own parlance it is not hullabalooing, but waggling. A hullabaloo — even a pleasant gentle one — implies boisterous doings. But you can waggle without saying a word or lifting a finger. You can waggle with your inmost soul in a perfectly respectable and secret way, when nobody — it may be in church, or in the trolley-car, or at a solemn Music — suspects you of anything but a little extra shine to your eyes and twist to your lips. Then again, you can waggle your way visibly but quietly through a rainy, dirty, dumpish day, so that people will almost signal back, with a kind of borrowed quirk of joy.

Of course a puppy is the perfect waggler. Our Airedale, with the sad brown eyes and rough coat and comically pivoted tail, can hardly stir himself without waggling. He loves us vastly, and he loves to be full of bones and fresh air and implicit trust in all dogs and men. Life is one glorious, simple-minded, adventurous holiday for him. He is downcast only when all his arts fail to persuade us that he should accompany us to church or to a dinner-party. Then he cries and grieves and quivers; but even his grief has a naïveté and honesty that are akin to his joy. We know that when we come back and fumble at the latchkey, a happy urgent moaning and grunting will be heard behind the door, and Ben will leap out at us, pawing the air, tossing his ears, crimping his staunch black-saddled body into incredible patterns, skidding along

the rug on the side of his funny face, — in short, waggling over us in an abandon of love and delight fit to melt the heart of the stoniest puppy-hater or cynic-at-large.

For the person who cannot appreciate the attitude of mind that waggles, in animals or men, must be either a terrible cynic or a terrible hypochondriac. Such a person would not be moved, I am afraid, even by the kind manners of a Black Wolf, with whom we lately passed the time of day in a traveling Wild-Beast Show. Perhaps the Black Wolf had been reading *Science and Health;* or perhaps he wished to show us that not all wolves like to eat Little Red-Riding-Hoods; or perhaps he was simply bored by the bourgeois steam-piano music and generally low tone (for a Wild Beast of parts) of the show. At any rate, when we stood before his bars and spoke politely to him, he waggled at us. There was no mistaking it: he waggled, head and tail, as amiably as our mild Ben at home.

Surely, if a moth-eaten Black Wolf in a five-foot cage can waggle, anybody can; and as I have said, the person who can neither understand waggling nor do it himself is in evil case. Many clergymen, many poets, many social investigators seem to have lost this simple power. They are too serious with the world and with themselves to remember that one of the most easily paid obligations to life is just letting one's self be pleased with the things that were put here to please one without sin or shame, no matter how much else there may be to fret and fight against forever. Now the Black Wolf had very little to give him joy. Instead of wild free spaces for running and hunting, he had a patch of dirty sawdust, iron bars, stale odors,

food flung at intervals, meaningless human shapes and faces: a life so tame and dull that even a house-dog would pine away under it. Yet that good Black Wolf had not forgotten the lively uses of his tail and head.

But I did not mean to write about the morals of waggling. I meant rather to tell of its simple causes. There are so many things that make one waggle. Of course, seeing the people whom we love and like produces waggling, or a 'pleasant, gentle hullabalooing.' But I should be sorry enough if ever a shining morning in green April, — a red October wood, — a full moon over frozen silvery lakes, — a good hearth-fire, — a field of daisies, — a snatch of old song, suddenly dancing from the dark halls of memory, — and a thousand simpler, smaller things, did not make me paw the air and wag my secret tail. (For it seems to me that human beings need self-expressive tails just as much as dogs do.)

Now, our precious Katy-in-the-kitchen waggles over a perfect soufflé, or a glorious Easter bonnet, or a 'murdery' moving-picture show; our newsboy over a prize bicycle or a full muskrat trap. There must be those who waggle over a glass of beer; a case won in the Supreme Court; a post-box filled with Suffragette stickum; a soul saved; a rise in stocks; a seal-skin coat smuggled; a neat horse-trade.

I cannot sympathize with all these causes for delight, but with the state of mind I do sympathize greatly. To be too old, or too sick, or too rich, or too poor, or too stupid, to waggle over anything would be more a death than death itself. And I have a suspicion that stupidity is the real root of most chronic heaviness of soul. I know old people, and sick people,

who have almost as little to be pleased with as the Black Wolf, and yet who have never forgotten how to twinkle with childlike joy. And surely it is stupidity that dulls and paralyzes the very rich. The poor, for all their handicaps, can give millionaires lessons in waggling.

But there must be no taint of affectation about it, or everything is ruined. The society-waggle is as cheap and poor a farce as the society-compliment. The pious waggle is yet worse. The only genuine variety is as swift and spontaneous as the wild shake of a horse's mane in the wind; as a terrier's bark and leap and sidewise antics down the road; as a small girl's hop-skip-and-jump in the sun, or a small boy's whistle and whoop as he tears from the school-door.

I wonder whether Stevenson did not have in mind a more serious aspect of this same mood when he wrote the familiar lines, —

> If I have faltered more or less
> In my great task of happiness;
> If I have moved among my race
> And shown no glorious morning face;
> If beams from happy human eyes
> Have moved me not; if morning skies,
> Books, and my food, and summer rain,
> Knocked on my sullen heart in vain; —
> Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take,
> And stab my spirit broad awake.

Even Stevenson called his happiness a 'great task'; and it was no wonder. For him, and for many, it must indeed be a task.

But it pleases me to feel that for most of us our passing happiness is no task: that we are not Black Wolves, but Airedale puppies. We waggle, not for stern Duty's sake, but because, like Ben, curled here

at my feet, and humorous even in his dreams, the world seems so lively and amazing to us that we cannot help it.

THE FELT LOCATION OF THE 'I'

I SUPPOSE everybody has tried, first or last, to make out just where he feels himself to be situated in himself. When the finger is pinched, it is plainly enough not *I* that am pinched, but my finger; and the same is true of a hurt in any part of the body. Notwithstanding the fact that the great controlling nerve-centres are in the brain, I have never been able to discover that a headache felt any nearer *me* than a finger-ache. Perhaps the nearest approach I have known to a sense of closeness, or to a veritable *me*-ache, has been a sharp pain in the stomach, especially when, on one occasion, I was struck in that region by a baseball bat which slipped from the hand of the striker.

But there is one point concerning our felt location which I think we all are sure of. It is the one brought out so deliciously by the dear little girl in *Punch*. 'You ought to tie your own apron-strings, Mabel!' says one of those irresistible young women of Du Maurier's. 'How can I, aunty?' is the reply. 'I 'm in front, you know!'

This is a shrewd observation in minute psychology. The spinal cord runs along the back, with all its ganglia; the weight of the brain is well behind; yet *we* are not there. In other words, the curious thing is that we feel ourselves to be, not in the region where impressions are received and answered in the brain and spinal cord, but where they first meet the

nerve-extremities. We seem to inhabit, not the citadel, but the outer walls. At the point of peripheral expansion of the nerves of sense, where the outer forces begin to be apprehended by us as inner, — 'in front,' where the fingers feel, and the nose smells, and the eyes see, — there, if anywhere, we find ourselves to be.

I have often been interested to notice whereabouts on our bodily surface another animal looks to find us. The man, or even the little child, looks at the face. Is it because the voice issues thence? Yet it is the eyes that are watched, rather than the mouth. Is it because the expression, the signal station for the changing moods, is there more than elsewhere? A dog, also, invariably looks up into the face. So does a bird, notwithstanding the fact that the food comes from the hand. Why does he not consider the 'I,' so far as his needs are concerned, to lie in the part that feeds him? But no; he cocks his head to one side, and directs his lustrous little eye straight to our own, in order to establish what communion he can with the very *him* of his master and friend.

It is hardly less pathetic than our own human efforts to pierce, by the searching penetration of the eyes, to the real personality of each other. We never succeed. We utter our imperfect articulate sounds to each other's ears, but we do not look thither. It is still at the appealing and dumbly yearning eyes that we gaze, and go away baffled and sorrowful at last.

ASYLUMS FOR THE HOPELESSLY SANE

THESE are courageous, intelligent days, when the world is taking itself in hand and studying its own wants, with the effect of divining some needs which our fathers crassly ignored. Our psychological development enables us more and more to look below the obvious surface of the demands of our civilization. Among other things, we are beginning to feel the necessity of erecting a few asylums for the hopelessly sane. The progress, if not the actual safety, of the commonwealth requires them.

Fortunately, there would never have to be many such institutions in existence; for sanity in its advanced stages is not a disease widely prevalent among human communities, and incipient sanity can generally be checked. But the demand might support a supply of one to every state.

What are the symptoms of sanity, and what are the dangers inherent in its development? Some of us know only too well. We have tried to deal with sane people. But others, more fortunate, have never felt the chilly blanketing of the malign influence, its distortion of the generous values of life, and they have to have their eyes opened to the thwarting peril.

Sanity holds such a wise equipoise among the conflicting forces of a none-too-sagacious world that it never gets pulled in any one direction more than in another. That sounds all right. Yes, the insidious nature of sanity is to sound all right. But some of the forces of the world are much better than others; some are so gloriously excellent that they should be yielded to utterly, followed without reserve to their extreme conclusion. What are such forces to make of

a person who says, 'Ah, well, yes, that does all very well; but you go too fast and too far, you become undignified. I agree with you, cautiously, up to a certain point. There I draw the line.' Sane people are always drawing lines. That is one of the surest indications of their malady. As if the hard-and-fast lines of our human destiny were not already drawn close enough! As if, enlisted in a good cause, we had any business to set ourselves boundaries!

Sanity is Argus-eyed, and sees a great many sides to every question. That, again, sounds very well. Surely, a catholic disposition is all to the good. But it does not look deep enough to compare one side with another; for, if it did, its individual temperament would compel it to preference. The great organization that has monopolized the term catholic, has a single vision and emphatic preferences. But it may be that sanity dispenses with individual temperament, and so foregoes the very standard of choice. At any rate, by its wide tolerant recognition, it commits itself to a policy of passivity in an active world.

But is sanity tolerant? If it were, it would at least be harmless, and there would be no need for the Sane Asylums. Unfortunately, like all its other characteristics, tolerance graces it only up to a certain point. Beyond that, a decided negation takes possession of it and makes it a grim force in the world.

One has only to study the history of humanity's greatest movements to see how this works out. The early Church went careering madly, bent wholly, fiercely, on righteousness, cutting off its hands, plucking out its eyes in every direction. The Kingdom might perhaps have come as soon as the disciples expected if that *élan* had continued. But then Constan-

tine arose, at the same time giving the new religion its first organized chance and teaching it its first lessons in worldly wisdom. 'Very well; you have your good points; I will help you — especially since, if I don't, you seem likely to make things unpleasant for me. But you go too far. You must learn self-control. I will set you an example by deferring my baptism till the hour of my death.' Perhaps it is ungracious to criticize the first Christian emperor; but certainly since his day the Church has ceased plucking out its eyes, and no longer succeeds in making things effectively unpleasant for anybody. It would speak volumes if some Tammany magnate, some iniquitous factory overseer, should feel the necessity of committing himself to baptism rather than suffer the slings and arrows of some outrageous religious denomination. Unhappily, it speaks other volumes that no one does.

Enthusiasm is too sensitive and spiritual an essence not to suffer from the shock and chill of encounter with prudence. It draws in its tentacles, contracts; and, when it recovers itself, finds itself a changed being in a hardening world. There is then nothing for it but to go slowly; for hard things require deliberate manipulation. Only things made molten by a fire of love and zeal flow swiftly into place.

One sees, then, how fatal the touch of sanity may be. It is not precisely contagious, for most of us — thank heaven! — have no germs of it in us; but it is very arresting. It interrupts the momentum by which many a good cause, if left to itself, would have carried all before it. When the world at last makes up its mind to become and to do that which it promised nineteen hundred years ago, it will have to begin by locking all its strictly sane people out of the way.

But if sanity is so thwarting, does it follow, on the other hand, that madness is the disposition which best suits human life? Natural selection seems to have found it so. Everybody is mad when he is most spontaneously, most effectively himself. For then he is literally beside himself, carried out of, away from himself, lost to his own recognition in the mighty sweep of his cause. He does not stop to weigh and consider, to balance expediencies; he lets himself go, and, almost without knowing it, accomplishes great things. He who is not mad when he is in love is a pretty poor kind of lover; and what are we all but desperate lovers of Heaven?

Madness is an attribute of youth, and sanity of maturity. That is the reason why a beneficent Providence has decreed that the span of human life shall be so comparatively short, and that nations and civilization shall be so frequently dissolved and dispersed. Only when people and countries are young, do they make vigorous history. When they take to turning on themselves and asking soberly, 'Is this worth while? Are we not becoming ridiculous?' they have to be safely annihilated. Then the world-progress, sorely interrupted and impeded, can gather itself together and go on again.

This is all quite too bad. For youth's inexperience is its serious handicap; and maturity's wisdom might stand it in good stead, if it were not taken in such over-doses that it becomes a poison. If people and nations could only conserve their madness through the whole course of their experimenting lives, learning the rules of the game while still devoting their passionate attention to the goal, they might end by making some really great and brilliant achievements.

Perhaps, then, sanitariums would be better than asylums for our sane. Instead of waiting till they become hopeless and then committing them permanently, it might be well to note the first symptoms and take them in hand. For the groundwork of human nature is so vital and healthy that, if it is encouraged, it can almost always throw off incipient sanity. The methods of such sanitariums would be interesting to devise. Patients not too far advanced in their malady would have a good time. They would be constrained to devote themselves recklessly to whatever they held most dear (provided the causes were approved worthy); they would be made to take risks, commit imprudences. By some ingenious arrangement of the daily curriculum, they would be constantly given the choice between that which is spontaneous, vital, and that which is reasonable; and, when they chose the latter, they would be hissed. A fine place, such a sanitarium! Stimulating, inspiring, invigorating. We should all of us want to go there, for very love of the standard, for very joy in the great contagion of enthusiasm. Sane and insane alike, we should look upon the experience as a sort of religious 'retreat.'

Ah! it is a desperate business, this life, to which we are so obscurely, so inexplicably committed. Our only chance with it is to take it desperately. It is infinitely greater than we are, it knows what it is about, its cosmic intentions endure. We are wise when we let ourselves go with it; we are very silly when we weigh and reserve our allegiance. So, then, the sane are the only insane? That is possible.

THE PASSING OF FRIENDSHIP

Is there really such a thing as friendship among men in our modern life?

There used to be, and the tie was as real and binding as marriage or paternity. In early ages it was the custom among Eastern peoples for two men who had chosen each other as comrades to bind themselves together by what was called the blood tie. After certain solemn ceremonies they pierced their arms with the point of their swords and each put a few drops of the blood of the other into his veins. After that they were allies and brothers for life; each was bound to help, to fight for, or, if need be, to die for his friend.

The age of chivalry, if one looks at it closely, was based upon these alliances between men. The squire followed the knight to the field, ready to die for him; the knight followed his lord, the lord his liege. Even a century ago, in this country, the seconds in a duel often fought to the death beside their principals, hardly asking what was the cause of the quarrel.

Among our own forefathers the personal tie between men was much more close and openly recognized than it is now. A man in business then expected his friend as a matter of course to endorse him to the full extent of his means. Hence when a popular fellow became bankrupt and carried a dozen of his endorsers down with him, nobody censured their folly. The sacrifice was regarded as unfortunate, but inevitable.

If you look closely at these early days you will find too that our forefathers made idols or nurses or servants of women, but their companions, their confidants, were other men. In the cramped village or farm life,

with few books and fewer newspapers, the men depended on one another for ideas, facts, jokes, even for emotions. They knew each others' opinions and queernesses by heart. They were forced to keep step from the schoolhouse on into maundering old age. One hears traditions of lifelong friendships between men, but the women abode either in the kitchen or in the dim regions of hazy romance.

Nowadays, the women of a man's household have pushed themselves or been pushed into place as his companions. They read the same books and papers; they work with him for civic reform; they differ with him perhaps in politics, but are ready to plunge deeper than he into stock-gambling. Why should he seek comrades elsewhere than at home?

He has no time now to become acquainted with men. Life is an incessant touch-and-go with him; the perpetual passing of crowds and battalions. He has no chance to know any man. His brother comes back from Japan to-day and is off to Paris to-morrow. There are no more long leisurely talks with a crony over the fire, winter after winter. His days are chopped up into incessant ten minutes of shouting over the telephone to Tom in New Orleans or Bill in Chicago. He subscribes largely to his church, but he would not know the minister if he met him on the street. He never even heard the name of his next-door neighbor. He works with masses, in trade, in politics, in religion. But, somehow, he has lost sight of the individual. He has no friend.

Has he not lost out of his life something worth the keeping?

AN' HIM WENT HOME TO HIM'S MUVVER

I AM the happy possessor of a small goddaughter, a little person of some three years, who is insatiably fond of stories. She prefers to have them told to her, but failing that, she will tell them herself. One of her favorite stories begins, 'Once 'ere was a lil' boy, an' him went out on a bee's tail.' I suppose what the little boy really went out on was a bee's trail; but to go out on its tail would certainly lead one to expect a much more unusual, not to say poignant, adventure.

I am not now concerned, however, with the beginnings of her stories, but rather with their invariable ending, which is always, 'An' him went home to him's muvver.' Bears, lions, tigers, even elephants and crocodiles, pass through the most agitating and unusual adventures, — adventures which, as a German acquaintance phrases it, 'make to stand up the hair,' — but in the end they all go home to their mothers. Is not this a far more satisfactory conclusion than the old impossible fairy-tale one — 'And so they married and lived happily ever after'?

'An' him went home to him's muvver.' What a port, after stormy seas! How restful — how soul-restoring — how human!

An astonishing bit of wisdom to be evolved by a little person of three! And does it not embody a deep truth which has come down to us from the gray dawn of Time, preserved in many an old myth? One remembers Antæus, for instance, whose strength was always renewed every time he touched his mother Terra, the earth. But my goddaughter's formula is matched by a far more wonderful story. One of the most often recounted adventures of her heroes is,

'An' him ate a lot of can'y an' got very sick, an' *ven* him went home to him's muvver.' — 'I will arise and go to my Father — ' Is not hers an exquisite baby version of the Prodigal Son? And has not her little tongue expressed a deep need felt by us all?

Just what I mean by a going-home to one's mother in this larger sense, is perhaps a little difficult to define. Yet, surely, it must be a very universal experience. Have we not all at some time — often following a period of confusion and stress of circumstances — suddenly experienced that deep sense of finding ourselves where we belonged? A sense of restfulness, of home-coming, of general rightness and well-being? It is a sloughing off of the non-essential and the trivial, and a shifting of the spirit into deeper and simpler channels; a pause, when in the midst of all this mad dance of time and circumstance one gets a sudden, enlarging glimpse of Truth and of Eternity.

I have been home to my mother very many times, and by very many different paths. Sometimes by way of books, when I have stumbled upon a revelation of thought which presses open spiritual doors; sometimes by way of familiar music; again, and perhaps most often of all, led home by Dame Nature, my hand in hers.

Every spring there is a going-home to my mother for me, when as May swings into her perfumed place among the months she finds me returned to a well-loved little corner of the world. There I am faced by the wide sweep of mountains which I have known always. I wander up and down long, familiar paths, dig in old flower-borders, and greet old friends. The trivial and ephemeral accumulations of the city winter melt away in this genial atmosphere of out-of-

doors, but what has been gathered of permanence, the spirit takes up and knits into its being. All the spinning confusion of life is tranquilized and for a little while the soul kneels down in obedience to that world-old command, 'Be still and know that I am God, the spirit of Truth within thee.'

Ah! these Heaven-sent periods, when the littlenesses of Time are swept away in a great in-rushing realization of Eternity!

Out of the past I recall one such glorified moment. It comes back to me only in fragmentary memories, and yet the essentials are all there. I remember first a confused, hot, somewhat disorganized kitchen. Unexpected visitors had arrived just at supper-time, and there was bustle and haste and some apprehension lest the larder should fall short. I remember hurrying out across the back yard to the storeroom, and then, all at once, out there in the wide, soft darkness, I remember I stood still. The heat and confusion of the kitchen were almost in touch of me, and yet were infinitely far away. For an instant, I was removed into an overwhelming peace. I remember whispering through the dark and stillness, childishly enough, no doubt, 'Are you there, little soul?' Afterwards I went swiftly on my errand, and presently was gathered back into the kitchen's confused bustle. But now all was changed. For that glorified instant out there in the dark I had touched bottom. I had been 'home to my mother.' A sordid way of return, the reader may think; and yet, does not much of the best in life flower out of its small, apparently sordid, necessities?

But what was this return? Nothing was apparently changed by it, and yet everything was really

changed. It was a spiritual revaluation; a showing up of temporal things in the light of things eternal.

There comes a time for all of us when we are met by the need of such revaluation. Surely the world is faced now by as crucial a need as it ever knew. Very terrible situations are starting up before us. In fourteen breathless, poignant months the old comfortable ways of half the world have been trampled into blood and destruction. We stand still, appalled, asking ourselves how we may meet these overwhelming catastrophies. I answer in all seriousness and with a deep conviction that it can be done only by going home to our mother. Only those of us can withstand the awful present who have the ability to enter into spiritual sanctuaries. Only the things of the spirit can shelter us; only our souls the big guns cannot blow to atoms. Health and wealth, ease, prosperity, security, where are they now? Ask Belgium. Ask Poland. Nay, ask half mankind.

'Be still and know that I am God, the spirit of Truth within thee.' Oh, little goddaughter, this is the real going home to one's mother. I can ask no more golden talisman for you to hold fast, through all the years to come and on into eternity, than this magic gift of the spiritual return.

THE FRIENDLY PILLOW

In enumerating the forces friendly to man, no scientific book that we can recall has mentioned the pillow. Yet in the experience of all it is one of the most constant and helpful of friends. How many tender hopes and quaint fancies are breathed to it; how many passionate or yearning prayers does it hear, too sacred

for human ears; how many joyful smiles are moulded in its sympathetic surface, and how many tears it can absorb! The conspicuous trait in the personality of the pillow is receptivity. Pudgy and rotund in physique, it is like pudgy and rotund people, eminently endowed with the power to absorb confidences, and digest them without inconvenience.

Hence its responsiveness to mood, its wondrous adaptability. Come to your pillow in a passion, it will reflect your hot breath and fill satisfyingly your clenching fists; come to it in serenity, its linen will be cool and clean, its texture ineffably restful; come to it in grief, it will encircle and protect you with its warm, solacing folds.

As a confidant, the pillow is strong exactly where human beings are weak. It does not exhaust you with an ill-adjusted mood, or drive you mad with well-meaning, irrelevant philosophy. It offers no solution for your problems, it makes no pretense to understanding your heart. It is entirely inert, impassive, incommunicative. Moreover, it is wonderfully patient. You pour upon it a torrent of abuse, you plead with it and narrate to it, you dig your elbows into it; in the middle of your violence you suddenly caress it, or laugh to it, or attempt to stuff it in your mouth; and all the while it makes no retort, it accuses you of no inconsistency, it does not look hurt or amused. How many people do you think would endure such manhandling? Let us appreciate the gentle pillow.

The discretion of the pillow equals its gentleness. One need never be afraid to tell a pillow anything. Its reticence is complete. With a human confidant you constantly distress yourself with scruples; you suppress this detail, or generalize that problem. With a

pillow, plump comes the whole story, and the air is cleared.

A pillow is never impatient and it never interrupts. It is an oddly stimulating thought to consider how many great novels and other works of literary or musical art have had for their first audience — pillows. If you outline to your pillow the plot of your new story, it does not point out flaws or nail incongruities. It is patient; it waits for you to see them yourself. If you softly whistle to it the theme of an embryonic sonata, it does not hint plagiarism, or in any other way convey disapproval. On the contrary, it listens so patiently and respectfully, that you must be an unappreciative performer indeed if you are not moved to fresh creation. One cannot too highly praise the perfect justice and candor of the pillow. There is nothing about it of pretense, — unless possibly the sham; and that, thank Heaven, is obsolescent. You always remove the sham, too, before getting at close quarters with the pillow; whereas, in the case of most people, the sham, whatever there is of it, is fixed.

We must not lay so much stress on the passive and receptive qualities of the pillow as to forget its more positive traits. Of these the most valuable is what we may call its composure, or serenity. It is never ruffled (we are speaking metaphorically), but always pleads deliberation. When, after a long and baffling day, spent fighting with intangible enemies or getting rubbed the wrong way by the thousand insignificant frictions that insult philosophy, you at length lay your weary head upon your pillow, what large and detached views does it not gradually suggest! It calms your boiling brain with a purely animal quiet; it answers your fretful bewilderments with an impersonal imper-

turbability. Without speech or sign, it unanswerably asserts the wisdom of patience, of postponement. It reminds you of the medicinal quality of time, of the drowsy syrups of the world. Like a hand on the brow, it tranquilizes you, not mentally, but elementally. What man has not held with his pillow some such conversation as this: —

Man. I am at the end of my rope. I can stand this no longer; what am I to do?

Pillow. How soft I am.

Man. Yes, you are deliciously soft — but what has that to do with my problems? I think I 'll get up and dress, and go — but I might wait till to-morrow.

Pillow. Wait a while. Don't your legs feel heavy?

Man. Luxuriously heavy, and my eyelids, too. Let 's see, what was I thinking about? — What a jolly old boy you are!

Pillow. Jolly old boy you are. Jolly old boy you are. [*Aside.*] He 's leaning harder now; he 'll be asleep in no time.

Thus practically does the pillow pursue its friendly service. Of course it would be grotesque to claim too much for its devotion. Doubtless there are times when even its white surface looks uninviting, when its impersonality repels rather than attracts us, and when we prefer even an ill-adjusted, indiscreet, impatient, interrupting, and irrational human being. But that only proves that nothing in this world can be everything. The pillow is not a microcosm, but it *is* a pillow, — let us not undervalue or fail to be duly thankful for its ministrations.

TURNING-POINTS

SINCE I became convinced, a long time ago, that the equator would not prove a physical barrier to the traveler who might wish to pass from one hemisphere to the other, and that the north pole was not a visible and tangible projection of the earth's axis, convertible into a flagstaff, should triumphant discovery ever arrive there, — since I discarded these and such-like geographical illusions, I have been chary of putting my trust in any sort of 'imaginary lines.' I have heard much said with regard to turning-points: travelers of undoubted veracity have shown me their charts, and I have been surprised to see how many right-angled turns they must have made in the course of their pilgrimage. Also, when they relate the casualties and rescues which have happened upon their route, I am forced to acknowledge that mine has been singularly safe, — safe even to monotony; its direction changing by such gentle curves that the alteration was apparent only at long intervals, and then merely by some difference in the slant of the shadows across my path, or by the obvious shifting in position of some star chosen as directive of the journey.

What is the turning-point? In common acceptation, it is the event or the influence which, with no warning given, suddenly draws or drives our life in a new direction, and but for which we should still pursue the old road. Do not we lose sight of the possibility that the change would have taken place without the aid of external force? The turning-points, I would say, are in our temperament and moral habitudes. If we search narrowly the conversation, incidents, and our own thoughts of the day past, we can usually find the data

of our night dreams; in the same way, looking back of what we count in our experience as a critical juncture, a great determining occurrence, we often see that desire, conviction, and purpose were steadily ripening towards the conclusion seemingly reached by us suddenly. *Our* readiness is all: a dozen supreme occasions pass without affecting our equanimity; the thirteenth comes and bears us along with it, not because it is greater than the occasions that went before, but because it is the one that our sly genius has for a long time been signaling and inviting.

Yet the belief in turning-points must brace and cheer many a faint heart. This new year,—may it not be the *annus mirabilis* which shall change immeasurably for the better ourselves and our fortunes? We somehow trust, notwithstanding we may have been inert, irresolute, and feeble in the past, that we shall reverse all this when our destiny culminates under the new influence. Much more to the point it would be if, instead of relying upon the miracles of a Wonderful Year, we vested our faith in Wonderful Every Day. If we expect to meet angels upon our future road, it will be much to our credit, meanwhile, to take in hand our own regeneration, not leaving all to be done by angelic agency.

The good preacher who told me that his conversion was accomplished 'in just fifteen seconds' impressed me as being a violent believer in the doctrine of turning-points. I cannot yet understand the system of spiritual chronometry that could determine to such nicety the time occupied by an experience of this character. I wonder not less at the faith of Musaphilus, who has been assured that only excess of culture — predominance of intellect over heart — interferes with

the fruition of his bardic hopes. Should Musaphilus fall in love (so says his counselor), the chances are that he will be able to prove his right to the title of poet! I wait to see if the blind miracle-worker will be able to meet triumphantly this trial test of Love's all-powerfulness.

None should say that there may not be for the soul, as it is claimed there are for the body, climacteric dates: but for the soul these are not to be computed by any arithmetic jugglery, any multiplying of seven into the odd numbers; here the carefulest calculations are liable to contain error. The great changes are most secret, being slow and gentle in their operations. I pass from the groves of deciduous trees to the evergreen wood: I look again and again up through the branches, yet I cannot tell you

> how the sacred pine-tree adds
> To her old leaves new myriads.

THE PASSING OF EMILY RUGGLES'S

AUTUMN has come and school has opened, yet no tops have appeared in our town. These be degenerate days! In the New England village where I live there is not a top to be had. Neither are there marbles in the spring, nor hoops, nor paper soldiers, nor slingshot elastic, nor — but let us simply say we have no Emily Ruggles's.

Miss Emily Ruggles kept the little notion store in the Massachusetts town where my boyhood was spent. She was almost as terrifying as her store was alluring. She must have been nearly six feet tall, and she had a deep bass voice and a forbidding manner. It was said that she wore a ramrod in the back of her dress, and

on Sunday when she was sitting very straight in her pew across the aisle from ours, wrapped in her best Paisley shawl, I used furtively to watch for some visible confirmation of this rumor. I thought the ramrod might slip up and show at the back of her neck. It was also said, I believe on sound authority, that she sent a substitute to the Civil War, and was highly indignant that she was n't allowed to go herself. For us youngsters who scrambled every Memorial Day for the cartridge-shells ejected by the G.A.R. firing squad after the salute, this was a thrilling fact about Miss Emily.

Her little store was in Lyceum Hall Block, close to the Post Office, and you climbed four steps to enter it, by a single heavy door without any slam-absorber. When you had pushed open this door and entered the somewhat dim interior, you looked toward the back of the room between two parallel counters, and behind a third counter which connected them at the rear you saw Miss Emily sitting, swathed in her weekday shawl. She looked at you sternly, to see if you were going to shut the door, and shut it quietly, and after you had done so, she demanded, in her deep bass voice, 'Which side, young man?'

This question had much point, for on the right side of the store, both on the counter and on the shelves behind it, were the notions — spools, needles, calico, garter elastic, and a hundred other things your mother was always wanting; while on the left side were kept marbles, paper soldiers, lead soldiers, slingshot elastic, air-guns, bows and arrows, slates, whistles, school pencils, compasses, paint-boxes, and a hundred other things *you* were always wanting. Miss Emily sat strategically at the rear of the store, and did not move

till she knew for certain what it was you were after. Nowadays this would be called efficiency. In those days our parents called it crankiness.

When Miss Emily took your pennies for an 'aggie' or a 'snapper' or a big glass 'popper,' she did so sternly, and she always examined them closely as if she expected counterfeits. She never smiled sweetly on you, and called you 'Sonny' or 'Little boy.' She never smiled at all. She called you, invariably, 'Young man,' in her aggressive bass. But the fact remained that she invariably kept on hand just the kind of marbles and toy soldiers and paper soldiers and dolls and pencils and paints the heart of youth desired, and slingshot elastic of pure rubber, which nobody else ever kept and which is quite unprocurable to-day; and she always put in an extra marble or two with a ten-cent purchase, and she never stretched the elastic on the yard-stick when she measured it, and the steps to her shop were worn hollow by the tread of children's feet. That was her prim New England way of expressing her affection. She studied for weeks to procure a window display which would delight the hearts of all the youngsters, and then she thundered at the first child who entered, 'Shut the door, young man — and don't slam!'

She knew the season for every game. She knew when marble time was due, and the appearance of glittering 'aggies' in her window invariably preceded by one day the drying up of the sidewalk along the Common. She knew when top time had arrived, and when the tops filled her window, then we laid aside our other sports and obeyed the call. At Valentine time her window was full of the most ravishing confections of paper lace and pink cupids and amorous poetry —

but never a 'comic.' The nefarious trade in 'comics' was carried on by a druggist who also was suspected of selling something stronger than soda. Miss Emily would have nothing to do with such iniquitous things as 'comics.' And all the time the left-hand window was constantly changing its display, the right-hand window contained the same bales of calico and boxes of spools till they were faded and dusty and fly-specked. Miss Emily's real interest was in the children's trade.

Long ago Miss Emily joined her fathers. Her store passed with her. There is none in that town to take its place, nor in other towns, either. No doubt most of the things she sold (except that marvelous sling elastic of pure rubber three quarters of an inch wide) can still be bought, some in one store, some in another. But they cannot be bought from the same counter. They are not assembled together for the eye of childhood to gloat over, not even in the occasional toy store of the large cities. Certainly there are no such shops any more in the villages and smaller towns, their steps worn hollow by the tread of little feet. Spinsters we have with us still, and children, too; but one form of mutual dependence between the two seems to have gone forever.

I have wondered sometimes if that is the reason the boys in the town where I live now never play marbles, or spin tops. In the past five years I have not seen a single game of marbles or once heard the shrill request, 'Gimme a peg at yours!' It is not strange that the slingshot has vanished, for automobile tires use up all the available rubber. But why should tops and marbles vanish from the earth? They have gone the way of the delightful children's matinées at the old Boston Museum, no doubt, and the Kate Greenaway

books, and the jack-stones little girls used to toss by the hour, sitting on the front steps. It makes one feel middle-aged and mournfully reminiscent.

THE EMBARRASSMENT OF FINALITY

'LIVE as if each moment were your last.' How often I used to come across such advice in the books that I read! At least it seemed often to me — too often. For while I accepted it as being probably good advice if one could follow it, yet follow it I could not.

For one thing, I could never bring myself to feel this 'last'-ness of each moment. I tried and failed. I was good at make-believe, too, but this was out of all reason.

I still fail. The probability that each moment is really my last is, I suppose, growing theoretically greater as the clock ticks, yet I am no more able to realize it than I used to be. I no longer try to; and, what is more, I hope I never shall. I hope that when my last moment really comes, it may slip by unrecognized. If it does n't, I am sure I don't know what I shall do.

For I find that this sense of finality is not a spur, but an embarrassment. Only consider: suppose this moment, or let us say the next five minutes, is really my last — what shall I do? Bless me, I can't think! I really cannot hit upon anything important enough to do at such a time. Clearly, it ought to be important, something having about it this peculiar quality of finality. It should have finish, it should in some way be expressive of something — I wonder what? It should leave a good taste in one's mouth. If I consulted my own savage instincts I should probably pick

up a child and kiss it; that would at all events leave a good taste. But, suppose there were no child about, or suppose the child kicked because he was playing and did n't want to be interrupted — what a fiasco!

Moreover, one must consider the matter from the child's standpoint: he, of course, ought also to be acting as if each moment were *his* last. And in that case, ought he to spend it in being kissed by me? Not necessarily. At any rate, I should be selfish to assume this. Perhaps he ought to wash his hands, or tell his little sister that he is sorry he slapped her. Perhaps I ought to tell my little sister something of that sort — if it was n't slapping, it was probably something else. But no, five minutes are precious. If they are my last, she will forgive me anyway — *de mortuis*, etc.; it would be much more necessary to do this if I were sure of going on living and meeting her at meals; then, indeed —

Yet there must be something that one ought to do in these last five minutes. There is enough that needs doing, — at least there would be if they were *not* my last. There is the dusting, and the marketing, and letter-writing, and sewing, and reading, and seeing one's friends. But under the peculiar circumstances, none of these things seems suitable. I give it up. The fact must be that very early in life — before I can remember — I formed a habit of going on living, and expecting to go on, which became incorrigible. And the contrary assumption produces hopeless paralysis. As to these last five minutes that I have been trying to plan for, I think I will cut them out, and stop right here. It will do as well as anywhere. Though I still have a hankering to kiss that baby!

I might think the trouble entirely with myself, but

that I have noticed indications of the same thing in others. Have you ever been met by an old friend at a railroad station where one can stop only a few moments? I have. She comes down for a glimpse of me; good of her, too! We have not met for years, and it will be years before we can meet again. It is almost like those fatal last moments of life. I stand on the car-platform and wave, and she dashes out of the crowd. 'Oh, there you are! Well — *how* are you? Come over here where we can talk. — Why, — you 're looking well — yes, I am, too, only I 've been having a horrid time with the dentist.' (Pause.) 'Are you having a pleasant journey? — Yes, of course, those vestibule trains are always hideously close. I 've been in a hot car, too. — I thought I 'd *never* get here, the cars were blocked — you know they 're tearing up the streets again — they always are.' (Pause.) 'How 's Alice? — That 's nice. — And how 's Egbert? — Yes, you wrote me about his eyes. What a good-looking hat you have! I hated to come down in this old thing, but my new one did n't come home — she promised, too — and I just *had* to see you. — *Do* look at those two over there! How *can* people do such things on a public platform, do you see? I 'll move round so you can look. — Why, it is n't time yet, is it? Oh, dear! And we have n't really *begun* to talk. Well, stand on the step and then you won't get left. — Yes, I 'll write. So glad to have seen you. — Going to be gone all winter? — Oh, yes, I remember, you wrote me. Well, good-bye, good-bye!'

The train pulls out a few feet, then pauses — one more precious moment for epochal conversation — we laugh. 'Why, I thought it had started — Well, give my love to Alice — and I hope Bert's eyes will be better

— I said, I *hoped* his *eyes* — *Egbert's eyes* — will be *better* — *will improve.*'

The train starts again. 'Good-bye once more!' I stand clutching the car door, holding my breath lest the train change its mind a second time. But it moves smoothly out, I give a last wave, and reënter my car, trying to erase the fatuous smile of farewell from my features, that I may not feel too foolish before my fellow passengers. I sink into my seat, feeling rather worn and frazzled. No more five-minute meetings for me if I can help it! Give me a leisurely letter, or my own thoughts and memories, until I can spend with my friend at least a half day. Then, perhaps, when we are not oppressed by the importance of the speeding moments, we may be able to talk together with the unconscious nonchalance that makes talk precious.

I have never heard a deathbed conversation, but I fancy it must be something like this, only worse, and my suspicions are so far corroborated by what I am able to glean from those who have witnessed such scenes — in hospitals, for instance. Friends come to visit the dying man; they sit down, hug one knee, make an embarrassed remark, drop that knee and pick up the other ankle. They rise, walk to the foot of the bed, then tiptoe back uneasily. Hang it, what is there to say! If he was n't dying there would be plenty, but that sort of talk does n't seem appropriate. What *is* appropriate — except hymns?

When my time comes, defend me from this! I shall not repine at going, but if my friends can't talk to me just as they always have, I shall be really exasperated. And if they offer me hymns —!

No; last minutes, or hours, for me might better

be discounted at once — dropped out. I have a friend who thinks otherwise, at least about visits. She says that it makes no difference how you behave on a visit, so long as you act prettily during the last day or two. People will remember that, and forget the rest. Perhaps; but I doubt it. I think we are much more apt to remember the middles of things, and their beginnings, than their endings. Almost all the great pieces of music have commonplace endings; well enough, of course, but what one remembers are bits here and there in the middle, or some wonderful beginning. If one is saying good-bye to a beloved spot, and goes for a last glimpse, does one really take that away to cherish? No, I venture to say, one forgets that, and remembers the place as one saw it on some other day, some time when one had no thought of finality, and was not consciously storing up its beauty to be kept against the time of famine.

One makes a last visit to a friend, and all one remembers about it is its painful 'last'-ness. The friend herself one recalls rather as one has known her in other happy, thoughtless moments, which were neither last nor first, and therefore most rich because most unconscious.

Live as if each moment were my last? Not at all! I know better now. I choose to live as if each moment were my first, as if life had just come to me fresh. Or perhaps, better yet, to live as if each moment were, not last, for that gives up the future, nor first, for that would relinquish the past, but in the midst of things, enriched by memory, lighted by anticipation, aware of no trivialities, because acknowledging no finality.

THE ERA OF PREDIGESTION

ECONOMICALLY, we live in an age of electricity; morally, in an age of pepsin. A mania for predigestion has laid hold of our generation, and we have simply got to reckon with it.

We began by pepsinizing the instruction given in our schools. When you and I, my fellow antique, were children, we were expected to work. A problem was stated, which we were to find our own way of solving; or a page in a book was named, the substance of which we were to commit to memory, the function of the teacher in those days being to supply the digestive stimulant which would help us to assimilate what we had taken into our intellectual system in its crude form. To be sure, that required of us two processes; for the teacher, if he knew his duty, did no more than set the internal machinery in motion: we exercised the memory first, and the understanding faculty afterward; but although it meant, in a way, more wear and tear on the mental mechanism, it also meant increased strength and a more highly energized power of absorption and adjustment. The old system produced some pretty sturdy human material, too. Who ever heard of Gladstone, or Tyndall, or our own Mark Hopkins, having to cut loose from his larger activities to weather an attack of our now universal disorder, nervous prostration!

Under the 'improved' system, the teacher does all the hard work, and does it in advance. The ideal is to make childhood, including the school period, a prolonged play spell. Far be it from me to cast reproach upon anything which renders life happier for any

class of human beings; but are ease and happiness always synonymous terms? The champion of the new system insists that the old one was economically wasteful, since to walk over well-cleared paths conserves force which would else be profitlessly expressed in hacking one's way through a jungle. Granted; and by the same token there is a shocking waste in our ordinary mode of eating and drinking, so why should not the whole race subsist on concentrated tablets and quench its thirst with vaporizers? Show me the person who has made such an experiment in scientifically sifted alimentation, and I will present him as a 'horrible example' to illustrate the other side of the argument. When Dr. Tanner went a step further, and proved that a man could live for forty days with no food at all, he did so at the cost of a set of teeth, and some other sacrifices which few of us are yet prepared to make. If the end sought is the reduction of the problem of living to its simplest terms, why not model upon the wild Indian and be done with it?

What began in the schools has spread through every domain. Reading the advertising pages of a popular magazine, one is forced to conclude that the world is reaching the point described in the epitaph of the tired woman:—

> Don't mourn for me now, don't mourn for me never,
> For I 'm going to do nothing forever and ever.

Here are a mechanical washer which will enable your wife to sit in a rocking-chair and read her *Atlantic* while the family linen is cleansed and wrung out automatically; an attachment to her sewing-machine which will absolve her from further thraldom to the treadle, and another with which she can mend

your hose without handling needle or darning-ball; a vacuum cleaner which, in the hands of your youngest child, makes sweeping and dusting a fascinating pastime; a mop which wrings itself, so that the woman using it need not wet her fingers; and a fireless cooker which renders you almost independent of Bridget.

Have you longed for a summer home in the country? Why waste money on a lot, and time on planning a house, when you can buy a portable cottage that you can put up or pull down when and where you will? The interior finish need not bother you, for here is a wall surface ready made which you can buy by the square yard and place in position as you need it, free from the nuisance of lath and plaster.

Is your work largely clerical? Provide yourself with a machine on which the bookkeeper has but to press a few buttons and his columns are footed; and a shorthand instrument with a phonetic keyboard, which prints pothooks as a typewriter prints letters. Even the daily trip to the bank may be cut out, now that we have banks which transact all kinds of business by mail.

Are you a genius? Behold an agency which advises you what to invent, procures a patent for your invention, markets the products, and collects the royalties; or another which, if you are of a literary turn, tells you how to write, edits your manuscript, and peddles it to the publishers; or still another which will read all the newspapers for you and sift out the articles on subjects that specially interest you.

Of course, you take more or less recreation? Look at this apparatus which will convert your row-boat into a motor launch in five minutes, and save you further slavery at the oars. If you are a wheel-man,

here is a motor-cycle which runs itself so that a legless man can ride it at his ease. Perhaps you have a fancy for photography? Buy this book and you need no practice, but become an expert in exposure at one reading; and in it is an address to which you can send your exposed films and have them developed and prints made from them for a mere trifle.

Possibly you have inherited a fortune. Well, you can escape the worry of hunting investments, by availing yourself of the information gathered by a company whose trade is the investigation of all sorts of enterprises. Or, if you are a man with an enterprise but no capital, read this book, and learn the whole secret of financing your scheme. Nay, let us go still further back, to the stage where you have neither money nor ideas, and here stands a professional 'vocationist' ready, for a consideration, to tell you exactly what occupation you are best fitted for; while from a dozen sources — elaborate textbooks, or university extensions, or correspondence schools — you can acquire, in the shortest time and with the smallest expenditure of effort, a facility in your chosen calling which in the old days would have cost you a long and toilsome apprenticeship.

Why multiply illustrations? Are not here enough to show that the world is by degrees getting ready to lie abed all day and transact its business, from feeding the body to earning an income, by pressing a button or consulting a book? By and by will come a master mind which will invent an automatic reading apparatus, and a device for transmuting thought into force so as to do away with the need of even reaching for the button. The male citizen will then be able to buy his political conclusions already moulded, and

have his vote cast for him by a patent polling machine; while for the mistress of the house will be contrived a set of appliances for driving tacks without the aid of her hair-brush, and opening tins when her embroidery scissors are mislaid.

TYPE III

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCOVERIES IN THE FAMILIAR AND COMMONPLACE

We all of us love trifles at heart; the shapes and aspects of things, the quality of sounds, the savors of food, the sweet and pungent odors of earth. We persuade ourselves, as life goes on, that these things are unimportant, and we dull our observation of them by disuse; but in all the essayists that I can think of, this elemental perception of things as they are is very strong and acute; and half their charm is that they recall to us things that we have forgotten, things which fell sharply and clearly on the perception of our younger senses, or bring back to us in a flash that delicate wonder, that undimmed delight, when the dawn lay brightening about us, and when our limbs were restless and alert. (A. C. Benson, *On Essays at Large.*)

MAN lives indeed by little things, and the sum total of his happiness is made up of many minor joys and daily trifles. Every normal child finds keen enjoyment in the mere exercise of his body and in the discoveries of the wonders of his own limited environment. To the mentally alert adult who retains his child heart and who possesses an active imagination and a genuine, wholesome interest in living, the world never loses its charm and power to entertain. But the person who becomes engrossed in the confusion and the mechanics of living and stumbles blindly through his daily routine, frequently loses his mental alertness and interest in the simpler, fundamental things of life. By too close and constant association with the familiar, and through the supplanting influence of those formally-regarded bigger, more important things in his conventional life, he comes to think that he has 'put away childish things' along with his outgrown toys. And so he be-

lieves, until some genial philosopher in the art of living who has a child heart and eyes that see, recalls for him these submerged minor delights. Then he is reminded that commonplaceness is not a quality inherent in a familiar object, fact, or condition, but an attitude of his own mind. He may regret, too, that he has neglected to keep alive his youthful zest and impressionableness.

In this type of the familiar essay, the subject is of even less importance than in other types; it is the personality of the author and his manner of handling his subject that gives the essay interest and charm for the reader. Every person has a nose, but few persons can entertain others with their observations on noses. Almost every civilized man the world over has had to wait his turn occasionally at the barber shop, but who amuses either himself or his friends with his reflections on tonsorial customs while he is waiting 'to give his head to the barber'? Few city folk find anything to amuse them in their twice-a-day street-car ride; but let some person who keeps an eye open for interesting details point out some of the possibilities of enjoying such a monotonous experience, and people who travel in street cars will smile, nod approvingly, and wonder why this happy idea never occurred to them. —It is the mark of the true familiar essayist to discover interest in the apparently uninteresting, something new and original in what most people regard as commonplace. Next to familiar essays about persons, none interests the reader more than an essay of this type.

TRAVELING ON THE BRANCH

It is only the same journey we have all taken, from country to city, but to-day I have resolved to have new eyes and to discover things. Just a commonplace day, and I am all alone, — will you come along?

We all know the increased family tenderness incident to departure. The demonstration begins on the evening before, indeed, sometimes as early as noon. Up to that hour I am jeered and flouted like the rest, but when evening sets in, when my trunk is packed and perhaps already trundled out to the express wagon, then I begin to enjoy a specious self-importance. Even the brothers become gruffly tender, and the father and the females pleasantly solicitous. On that last night I have my favorite dishes, and eat of them with a relish of complacency; doubtless I am the favorite child, when I am going away.

But the next morning, — the impossibly early start, the family sleepy-eyed, the breakfast under-done, a key forgotten, the carriage late, everybody trying to remember not to be cross on the last morning, — for irritation is a luxury belonging only to long companionship, — a sudden great wave of homesickness engulfing me, — I won't go after all, why should I? Then a furious onslaught of embrace upon each, to have it all over as soon as possible. After all, I arrive at the station fifteen minutes too soon, and might better have been back at the house with them, — that is, with those of them who have n't come to see me off. Those who have come, after some manful pacing of the plat-

form, put me on the car, not knowing what else to do with me. Above the rattle of the milk cans we shout to one another smiling inanities such as at any other time we could not believe ourselves capable of conceiving. When we cannot hear ourselves speak, we bob and beam brightly at one another, — will the car never start? At last it does, only to draw back with a jerk. It is the little pompadoured girl from the post-office who runs up, calling for the mail-bag. We obligingly drop it out upon her, and she fishes for a letter which has changed its mind and will not go to-day. Meanwhile train and trainful watch and wait, wondering whose the letter and what was the matter with it.

My car is divided by a partition in the middle, half a car for people, half a car for baggage, reminding us what an impersonal matter we persons are to a railroad thrusting upon us rudely man's equality with his luggage. They will treat us better when we come nearer to civilization. This is but a branch, with fewer miles than letters in its pleasant-sounding name. When we get to the Junction and swing on to the Main Line things will be different.

Out of window it is a dull, rainy day, day of days to enjoy the subtleties of green: green of bush, green of tree, green of field, green of far-away hill. Keeping close to our course, low trees mark the meandering line of a river too small to see. Thrifty farms slide one after one past my window. The farmhouses are but so-so, but the barns are proud piles, and they stand, tall and impudent, always between the farmhouse and the view. From the farm windows eyes of tired women look out at us rushing by to unknown cities. It is never work, but loneliness, that brings that dull hunger in the eyes. Do I wonder that the country throngs to the

city? No, I myself should prefer the tenement, with its color and life and stir, — above all, its absorbing domestic drama playing every minute before one's eyes.

Everywhere that I look out over field and hill, there are cows, cows, cows, — black and mottled, Holsteins and brown Jerseys. At every crossroad we stop and take on milkcans. A slow progress we make, but in this region it is my Lady Cow that rules the road, her times and seasons that regulate the timetable.

Across my vision slips by one field that arrests my attention. It is of corn, and it is weeded of all but buttercups. What æsthetic vagary on the part of the farmer, I wonder? Now I turn from without the car to those within. Half the thirty passengers I know by sight and name, and have already greeted. They all know one another, and their voices, with their harsh nasal *aow*-ing, are heard in chat above the rattle of the car-wheels. As always on the Branch, one corner of the car is occupied by drummers. Why are drummers always fat? I never saw a thin one. I never observed the fare of the country hotel to be noticeably nutritious, yet these men, though spending their days among these hostelries, would appear to be the best-fed men in America.

Passengers on the Branch wear their best clothes on their backs, and carry the rest in telescopes. The women are overdressed, but they are betrayed by their finger-ends and their carriage and their belts. On other days they belong to pot and kettle, mop and broom. Whatever illusions may be preached, domestic labor is rarely becoming. Observe in noting costume that here on the Branch the belt line of ladies tips up in the front and down in the back. When we reach the Junction it will run around on the level,

and when we touch the city it will have changed about, up in the back, down in the front. The women before me have hair that hangs in a straight fringe over their collars, being too straightly jerked up under their hats.

There are children aboard, of course, and babies in arms, and the children lop and flop about the seats, chew gum, and eat candy and large pale cookies. They torment their mothers as if such were their constant habit. How spoiled are the children of the rural! The babies are pudgy, dingy mites, strictly home-made from tip to toe, cap, coat, and bootlet. In cities, the babies of the poor are always ready-made.

On we rumble and rattle, slowly ever. Once we stop, so it appears, merely to allow a thirsty trainman to get out and pump himself a drink. There is no flashing by of scenery we would fain arrest; we have plenty of time to see it all. Though it is not yet August, the goldenrod is beginning to dust the fence-rows with yellow, presaging September and what we country folk aptly call 'the fall of the year.' Sometimes a hopyard fills all my window; and I never see one without a shiver at Kipling's metaphor, where the vision of the swaths of men suddenly shot down in the ranks is compared with the opening and closing of these leafy vistas as a train passes them by.

From time to time, on far hill farms, one sees wee plots enclosed, sentinel gravestones keeping watch. Family burial plots belong to generations before ours, when the living and the dead seemed to desire to dwell close together. In these days, when farms change hands so often, a farmer may know nothing of the dead he shelters, and in alien hands the little place of quiet falls to rapid decay. They do not care, these

men and women foredone with farm toil, asleep now this long, long while in the only rest the farm has ever allowed them.

At last, after much inexplicable backing and shifting and snorting of our engine, many false stops, false starts, we come puffing into the Junction, and the car, passengers and baggage, empties itself out on the platform. A junction is a place where you always wait, whether you expect to or not; your train and your hopes always deferred without any explanation. At the Junction it is hot and crowded and dirty and dull. Through the sultry July morning, insistent as the shrilling of a locust, tick-ticks the telegraph wire. At the Junction a curious self-consciousness has attacked my fellow-travelers. Jovial and at ease before, they now talk not at all, or in low tones, suspicious of strange listeners. Their manner has assumed that studied indifference, overlying intensity of observation, which always betrays the stay-at-home when abroad. Your much-traveled man or woman is not afraid of looking keen and curious. Among our provincial throng I note one exception, — one man actually in gloves, seated in a corner by himself, lost in a book.

Our country stations afford a good exhibition of one-man power. Anxious, perspiring, efficient, but none too civil, the porter, baggage agent, ticket agent, telegraph operator, and general dictator, five men in one, bustles about his several callings. Inevitably, if the traveler desires his services in one capacity, he is employed about some one of the other four; inevitably your particular demand will be number five on the list. You get nervous while you wait, and so does he; but somehow he always gets done in time.

As my train draws out from the Junction, my last sight is the station-master shouting final directions as to freight, while he mops the brow of a mind relieved.

MAN'S LAST EMBELLISHMENT

THE necktie came into being when some savage, overpowered by political enemies and left gracefully swaying from the lower branches, was cut down on the timely arrival of a man from his home town, sufficiently friendly to be of service. We can fancy the survivor now, the noose still dangling from his neck, returning *con moto* to his anxious spouse and celebrating the timeliness of the rescue in the light of his longevity. And we can see him, further, in a spirit of blatant conceit, wearing the very same noose for the rest of his life, as a child might display the first tooth extracted, or a cowboy a bullet-pierced sombrero: a proof, as it were, of a surviving something, a memento of a crisis passed.

And so throughout the ages it has endured until it has risen to the exalted position of being man's only embellishment. Often we have looked enviously at the male pheasant as an example of what we might have accomplished, had we started right. Often we gaze about ourselves at a social gathering and admit how utterly outclassed we are, ostentatiously and sartorially, by those whom we call the weaker sex. For weak as they are, they have preëmpted the one male distinction in the rest of the animal kingdom — beauty of covering. Here we are far advanced in the twentieth century, with no claim to splendor in garb save a small province of color, bounded on the north by sharp, rugged cliffs of stiff white linen, and on the

south by the ever-advancing frontier of the waistcoat.

How valueless intrinsically it is; it serves no purpose whatever. Our hats and our suits tend to keep us warm. Our shoes cushion the shock between man and concrete. But the cravat neither warms nor protects. Time may have been when the collar was kept in its appointed place by its embrace. Now, *O mores!* the collar keeps the tie in its place and prevents its rising ever above its station. Sadly we see its usefulness wither until in those efficient creations worn by the lower classes we see it entirely dependent upon the collar, clinging to it with atrophied lugs that are as valueless in their function of security as the feathered stumps of the cupid are for aviation. But dignity demands it. We men may remove our hats and coats and still be received and respected. But let us once appear *sans* cravat and we have lost our dominating position and prestige.

It requires a woman to appreciate her own hat or that of another woman. Similarly, no one but a man can fully enjoy a necktie. Every fabric has its meaning and value. The coy, delicate and ephemeral crêpe, the naïve and brilliantly conventional foulard, the joyous and single-minded poplin, the illusive and resplendent satin, the patient and long-enduring knit tie, — we love them all for their beauties and we coddle them in spite of their obvious deficiencies.

Only the wearer can select a scarf; this is an unbending rule. But how often is it disregarded! Imagine the smug self-sufficiency of the feminine mind which considers itself capable of selecting a man's necktie, the most exacting bit of silk in the world! Fancy the futility of such a mind passing judgment

on it! Criticize, and with reason, the cut of our clothes and hair; advance theories upon gloves and footwear; but be silent if you cannot commend the neckwear of a man. There you have the artistic culmination of the male. Censure it, and you insult at the same time his judgment, pride, and sense of beauty.

Every morning we stand before the mirror, flap the large end over and around, push it behind and up and draw it carefully through. It becomes a habit, and yet, like dining, it has a certain fascination. The keen pleasure of a new and uncreased cravat helps to make a whole week brighter. And that dread day when a white spot appears in the centre of the front of our favorite green one, or when the beloved brown parts internally, and, while appearing the same without, tells us that it is gone forever — that day our coffee is bitter and the mercury low.

But we never cruelly desert a faithful friend. For a couple of times after the white spot appears we try to tie it farther up or lower down, usually with pathetically ineffectual results. And then we pasture it back somewhere on the rack with the bow-ties that are not good taste any more and the selections made by a worthy aunt at a reduction sale, and let it enjoy a quiet old age. Somehow eventually it disappears. We do not know how. Perhaps a careless maid drops it in a waste-basket, or a plotting wife makes away with it. But most probably, like old watches and college textbooks, it has some unseen heaven of its own whither it is wafted after its life amongst us is over.

In the necktie, then, lingers our one surviving beauty of the past, our one hope of distinctiveness for the future. We have forsaken the ruffles and laces, we have abandoned the purple breeches and plum-

colored coats. The fancy waistcoat is slinking out of sight. Deserted and alone, the cravat remains a tiny mirror reflecting the splendor of man's bygone ages, a rebel against the increasing usualness of male attire. Symbolic of the breaking away from the tightening noose of convention, it hangs about our necks a spot of happiness in the gathering gloom of sombre shades.

Curs'd be the fashion promoter who dares abolish the necktie; who would originate a scarfless garment, or a cravatless collar. He is not only a radical and an iconoclast; he is cutting at the last tenuous but enduring support of the glory of man himself.

THE LIER IN BED

If I had to get on with but one article of furniture, I think I would choose a bed. One could if necessary sit, eat, read, and write in the bed. In past time it has been a social centre: the hostess received in it, the guests sat on benches, and the most distinguished visitor sat on the foot of the bed. It combines the uses of all the other articles in the '$198 de luxe special 4-room outfit' that I have seen advertised for the benefit of any newly married couple with $20 of their own for the first payment. Very few houses, if any, nowadays are without furniture that nobody uses, chairs that nobody ever sits on, books that nobody ever reads, ornaments that nobody ever wants, pictures that nobody ever looks at — an accumulation of unessential objects that does credit chiefly to the activity of manufacturers and merchants catering to our modern lust for unnecessary expenditure. Not so many centuries ago one or two books made quite a respectable library, dining-room tables were real banqueting

boards laid on trestles and taken away after the banquet, one bench served several sitters, and a chair of his own was the baron's privilege. To-day the $198 de luxe special 4-room outfit would feel naked and ashamed without its '1 Pedestal' and '1 Piece of Statuary.' Yet what on earth does a happy couple, bravely starting life with $20, want of a pedestal and a piece of statuary? And I notice also that the outfit —'a complete home,' says the description — makes no provision for a kitchen; but perhaps they are no longer de luxe.

It is impossible, at this time, to recover with complete certainty the antiquity of the bed. Presumably the Neanderthal man had a wife (as wives were then understood) and maintained a kind of housekeeping which may have gone no further than pawing some leaves together to sleep on; but this probably was a late development. Earlier we may imagine the wind blowing the autumn leaves together and a Neanderthal man lying down by chance on the pile. He found it pleasant, and, for a few thousand years, went out of his way to find piles of leaves to lie down on, until one day he hit upon the bright idea of piling the leaves together himself. Then for the first time a man had a bed. His sleep was localized; his pile of leaves, brought together by his own sedulous hands, became property. Monogamy was encouraged, and the idea of home came into being. Personally I have no doubt whatever that the man who made the first bed was so charmed with it that the practice of lying in bed in the morning began immediately; and it is probably a conservative statement that the later Pliocene era saw the custom well developed.

One wonders what the Neanderthal man would have

thought of a de luxe 4-room outfit, or complete home, for $198.

Even to-day, however, there are many fortunate persons who are never awakened by an alarm-clock — that watchman's rattle, as it were, of Policeman Day. The invention is comparatively recent. Without trying to uncover the identity of the inventor, and thus adding one more to the Who's Who of Pernicious Persons, we may assume that it belongs naturally to the age of small and cheap clocks that dawned only in the nineteenth century. Some desire for it existed earlier. The learned Mrs. Carter, said Dr. Johnson, 'at a time when she was eager in study, did not awake as early as she wished, and she therefore had a contrivance that, at a certain hour, her chamber light should burn a string to which a heavy weight was suspended, which then fell with a sudden strong noise: this roused her from her sleep, and then she had no difficulty in getting up.'

This device, we judge, was peculiar to Mrs. Carter, than whom a less eager student would have congratulated herself that the sudden strong noise was over, and gone sweetly to sleep again. The venerable Bishop Ken, who believed that a man 'should take no more sleep than he can take at once,' had no need of it. He got up, we are told, at one or two o'clock in the morning 'and sometimes earlier,' and played the lute before putting on his clothes.

To me the interesting thing about these historic figures is that they got up with such elastic promptness, the one to study and the other to play the lute. The Bishop seems a shade the more eager; but there are details that Mrs. Carter would naturally have refrained from mentioning to Dr. Johnson, even at the

brimming moment when he had just accepted her contribution to the *Rambler*. For most of us — or alarm-clocks would not be made to ring continuously until the harassed bed-warmer gets up and stops the racket — this getting out of bed is no such easy matter; and perhaps it will be the same when Gabriel's trumpet is the alarm-clock. We are more like Boswell, honest sleeper, and have 'thought of a pulley to raise me gradually'; and then have thought again and realized that even a pulley 'would give me pain, as it would counteract my internal disposition.' Let the world go hang, our internal disposition is to stay in bed: we cling tenaciously to non-existence — or rather, to that third state of consciousness when we are in the world but not of it.

There are those, no doubt, who will say that they have something better to do than waste their time wondering why they like to stay in bed, which they don't. They are persons who have never been bored by the monotony of dressing or have tried to vary it, sometimes beginning at one end, sometimes at the other, but always defeated by the hard fact that a man cannot button his collar until he has put on his shirt. If they condescend so far, they will say, with some truth, that it is a question of weather, and any fool knows that it is not pleasant to get out of a warm bed into a cold bedroom. The matter has been considered from that angle. 'I have been warm all night,' wrote Leigh Hunt, 'and find myself in a state perfectly suited to a warm-blooded animal. To get out of this state into the cold, besides the inharmonious and uncritical abruptness of the transition, is so unnatural to such a creature that the poets, refining upon the tortures of the damned, make one of their greatest agonies con-

sist in being suddenly transported from heat to cold — from fire to ice. They are "haled" out of their "beds," says Milton, by "harpy-footed furies" — fellows who come to call them.' But no man, say I, — or woman either, — ever lay in bed and devised logical reasons for staying there — unless for the purposes of an essay, in which case the recumbent essayist, snuggle as he may, is mentally up and dressed. He is really awake. He has tied his necktie. He is a busy bee — and I can no more imagine a busy bee lying in bed than I can imagine lying in bed with one. He is no longer in the nice balance between sense and oblivion that is too serenely and irresponsibly comfortable to be consciously analyzed; and in which, so long as he can stay there without getting wider awake, nothing else matters.

Lying in bed being a half-way house between sleeping and waking, and the mind then equally indifferent to logic and exact realism, the lier in bed can and does create his own dreams. If his bent is that way he becomes Big Man Me: Fortunatus's purse jingles in his pocket; the slave jumps when he rubs the lamp; he excels in all manly sports. If you ask with what authority I can thus postulate the home-made dreams of any lier in bed but myself, the answer is easy. It is common knowledge that the half-awake minds of men thus employ themselves, and the fashion of their employment may be reasonably deduced from observation of individuals. The ego even of a modest man will be somewhat rampant; the ego of a conceited one would, barring its capability for infinite expansion, swell up and bust. But this riot of egoism has as little relation to the Fine Art of Lying in Bed as a movie play has to the fine art of the drama. The true

artist may take fair advantage of his nice state of unreason to defy time and space, but he will respect essential verities. He will treat his ego like the child it is; and, taking example from a careful mother, tie a rope to it when he lets it out to play. Thus he will capture a kind of immortality; and his lying in bed, a transitory state itself, will contradict the transitory character of life outside of it. Companions he has known and loved will come from whatever remote places to share these moments, for the Fine Art of Lying in Bed consists largely in cultivating that inward eye with which Wordsworth saw the daffodils.

Whether this can be done on the wooden pillow of the Japanese I have no way of knowing, but I suspect there were some admirable liers in bed among the Roman patricians who were grossly accused of effeminacy because they slept on feathers. The north of China, where bedding is laid in winter on raised platforms gently heated by little furnaces underneath, must have produced some highly cultivated liers in bed. The proverbial shortness of the German bed (which perhaps explains *Kultur*) may have tended to discourage the art and at the same time unconsciously stimulated a hatred of England, where the beds are proverbially generous. One can at least hope, however, that all beds are alike in this matter, provided the occupant is a proper lier, who can say fairly, —

My bed has legs
  To run away
From Here and Now
  And Everyday.
It trots me off
  From slumber deep
To the Dear Land
  Of Half-Asleep.

FIRE WORSHIP

I FIND my prejudice in favor of summer greatly diminished at the coming of weather sufficiently cold to recommend the kindling of fires in grate and stove. With what readiness we obey the Horatian injunction:

> Dissolve frigus ligna super foco
> Large reponens.

A long-banished, familiar friend returns when once more the fire smiles and beckons from behind its mica windows, or, better yet, in full view, mounts its invisible ladder in an open grate. This malicious demon of the South Sea islander's superstition, spitting flame out of the wood, is, in our more intimate experience, a very powerful genius, whom we are able to invoke to friendly alliance by means of friction and a little phosphorus at the point of a pine sliver. Hail, mighty magician, patient bond slave, acute companion, live kaleidoscope of wonderful colors and changes! Only those who possess the knack of 'building a fire' are genuine fire-worshipers; to those only the genius deigns to exhibit its cunningest sorceries. When the trains of kindlings have been laid, with all the proper nooks and crannies planned to secure a draught and invite ambuscade, and when the match has been applied, and the nimble flames rush out to reconnoitre, the successful fire-builder may well look upon himself as a sorcerer, not of the black but of the bright art. How mysterious is this fugitive element, now here upon the hearth, and now gone — none knows whither! 'The unknown cause of the sensation of heat' almost savors of poetic mysticism; yet it is a mere phrase of

the dictionary-maker, who is at loss how to give us an absolute definition.

Fire, though commonly accounted a mute, is not without a certain degree of vocality and semi-articulate speech. It has its soft and rough breathings, its undertones, and its notes of triumph, as it drives a lambent wedge between the bark and the body of the wood, or makes a spiral escalade up through some knot-hole. Often it gives out a fine staccato click, not unlike the snapping of frost on the panes in a still winter night.

I am impressed with the secretive virtue of the fire. It alone, among the elements, never tells tales, never renders up aught committed to its charge. Whether it burn ordinary wood or a Meleager's brand, the ashes give no hint. Let one lodge his treasure with the earth, but in a convulsive fit she may some time lay it bare. Nor is the sea always a safe custodian: witness how it sent a fish ashore with the king's ring, cast as a votive offering to the gods forever! But the fire has a deep past the reach of lead and line. It is therefore the best preservative from moth and rust, which make such sad havoc among the precious things in our reliquaries; it is also the only known preventive against the curious or careless hands of strangers in the after-time. The best 'fire-proof safe,' perhaps, is the fire itself. Besides, the more we consign to this royal conservator, the greater the credit and confidence it yields us. What does Vesta write to me? A glowing résumé of my friends' sparkling letters, which I resolutely sacrificed a short time ago. The paper on which they were traced has fallen into ashes, but the subject-matter reappears in a magnificent red-line and red-letter edition. Sometimes, as I watch the burning of such offerings, I read a ghostly leaf of the original manuscript,

charred or wholly consumed, yet buoyed up by the breath of the fire for an instant, while my glance runs over the unviolated charactery.

If the hunter or explorer, encamped in some 'lion-haunted island,' owes to fire his preservation from wild beasts, the solitary, by his own hearth has the same charmed defense against the jungle inhabitants of his thought. If fire warm the body, shall it not also warm the spirit, which is by nature akin, being an authentic spark of Promethean heat? May I be forgiven if I let go the doctrine of hell fire, and adopt that of heaven fire! What flame burns, and burns not to the refining of that which was committed for ordeal? This immortal symbol of purgation let me celebrate in terms of the ancient Gueber hymn, recently brought to light in red-letter text: —

Where goest thou, keen soul of heat,
So bright, so light, so fleet;
Whose wing was never downward bent,
Aye pluming for ascent?
Where goest thou, when, breaking loose
From all mechanic use,
From beacon-head and altar-stone
And hearth of mortal flown,
Thou spreadest through the air apace,
Dissolving in wide space?

Continually the waters fall;
Springs, torrents, rivers, — all,
Drawn downward to the gathering deep,
Remain within its keep.
But thou to the empyrean sea,
Bright upward stream, dost flee,
Where stars and sun are lost to sight,
Drowned in exceeding light!

Continually, in strength and pride,
The great ships cut the tide;

The waters fall, and these descend
Unto their journey's end.
But who, upborne on wing of thine,
Shall reach thy goal divine?
Thither, O rapt and holy Fire,
Thither, bid me aspire,
That, when my spirit's flame burns free,
It shall ascend with thee.

ON SAWING WOOD

'To say nothing and saw wood,' seems to me one of the most sagacious phrases passed down by our hard-working forebears. Like most sayings which have emanated from manual labor, this is blunt, homely, and, to the loquaciously inclined, painfully accurate. Show me a man bent jack-knife-fashion over a saw-horse, with a short log under his buck, and I will point out a man who is minding his own business with admirable zeal. If he must speak, he stops sawing. While he saws he is necessarily mute. Hence this shrewd phrase, which is, punning aside, a perfect saw.

But though such excellent concentration on one's business is a good thing, it is by no means all that may be said in praise of sawing wood. The hygienic experts tell us that the rhythmic motion is a nearly ideal exercise for the muscles of the body. Well, that is good, too; but I am afraid that even that is not its best recommendation. Walking is a fine exercise, but walking has come to be almost the woe of persons without car-fare. Lying flat on one's stomach, and raising one's self by the hands and toes is an admirable treatment for superfluous weight; but it is very like a punishment, as any one who practices it seriously will admit in confidence. No; to say that any

exercise is beneficial is not likely to procure for it many stout adherents. It will not do to advertise that side of sawing wood alone.

To say truth, I am not quite able to give an exact reason for the fascination exerted over a normal man who approaches his saw-horse in the right spirit. It may be the sharp response of the iron teeth, as they bite into the wood. Or it may be the feeling of power and victory, conveyed by the final surrender of the log, when one end, beheaded in the unequal struggle, falls with a satisfying thud. Or it may be the ancient sense of husbandry, of storing away fuel for the winter days, that returns with what is, naturally, one of the most primitive kinds of work. These are random guesses. No doubt, if William Hazlitt had possessed a saw-horse and a couple of cords of four-foot wood, he would have said these things better long ago, and given reasons besides.

There are pleasing odors, and quite indescribable, from the many varieties of new-sawn wood. They are not for the flat-dweller. The practiced nose of the sawyer can distinguish beech from birch, and oak from maple; and when he comes upon a stick of wild cherry, which, of all our hard woods is most fragrant, he will be aware of its presence at the first slide of the saw, even though he be blind-fold.

Again, each kind of wood has an individuality, some peculiarity which brings an agreeable sense of variety to the sawyer. The tough oak-butt gives battle worthy of any man's arms. Maple, too, especially the rock maple so plentiful on New England hills, falls no willing victim to the steel. Beech is not so stubborn when not too dry; and as for birch, — birch is a prodigy. It grows quickly, and with its chaste and beau-

tiful bark I am afraid it poses a good deal among its less attractive brethren of the forests. It is the lazy man's delight on the saw-buck. I am speaking of the white, or silver birch. The yellow variety develops great surprises, and is notably knotty and deformed in figure.

I have said that the birch log is the lazy man's delight. This, of course, is my private confession. I know that as I survey my own pile of cord-wood, of some pretension, I take almost unconscious note of the white sticks therein, and view askance some of the darker hues of bark; for I know their mettle. I have set myself a stint. This does not mean that I am methodical by nature. On the contrary, I am quite out of harmony with preciseness; but the stint seemed the only way by which I could be certain of reducing those logs to stove-dimensions.

Stint is a good word, as a noun. As a verb it means something not quite so pleasing. Do not confound it with stunt, however. A stunt is something quite useless. It is the horse-play of the mountebank, and has nothing in common with honest, productive labor. A stint is the warning to the wise that something demands to be accomplished; a goad to the laggard that time is on the wing. — Well, my stint is twenty sticks every morning. Twenty four-foot logs, selected with the unbiased, hopeful eye that every sawyer possesses before he begins his work; and whether these are finished before breakfast, or after breakfast, is of little consequence. For myself, I find that ante-breakfast labor is deadly. I have heard of persons who walk a certain number of miles before breakfast. To get an appetite, I suppose. It seems to me no less than a slur on good food. But this is a matter that may be

left in abeyance. Our theme is the stint, and the doing of the stint.

The saw should be sharp. He works long who works with dull tools. If this is not already a proverb, it should be. Then the saw should be 'set' properly. For a long time I labored vainly because of my ignorance of this point. The saw was sharp, yet it did not seem to be doing its work. It was a neighbor who looked at the blade with the eye of a connoisseur, and announced the difficulty. The set of a saw, and the hang of a scythe, are two bits of knowledge that must be learned afield. They are not in books.

Well, then, the saw is admirable, and the horse, or buck, not too high or too low, and the log is ready. Perhaps it is just as well if it is a sapling, to begin with, or a stick which the woodsman has split with a wedge. Pyrrhic victories are not uncommon in sawing wood. To triumph over a stout stump of oak is not so much of a triumph, if the victor sits breathless on the chopping-block for a half hour, viewing the remains, and getting back his breath. And let the attack be not too brilliant, I pray. Let not the sawdust fly too briskly, for after the first stick is sawed there are nineteen more to come, if twenty be your stint, as mine.

The best woodsman I ever saw was a French Canadian, who chopped so moderately that it seemed impossible he would ever earn his salt. But every blow counted; and he could take out a bigger chip than any man around. So let it be with your sawing. Begin good-naturedly, and calmly, as though there were time enough for all things. Do not try to hurry the saw or bear on it too hard. The saw knows best what company it is in, and 'driving' will not help.

When the last stick is finished, examine the ends carefully. This one was done in a workmanlike manner, you will see. That one is ragged, hesitating; if not a botch, yet not all that can be desired. On this there are marks of a false start; you were uncertain, wavering. This shows the place where you stopped, to wonder perhaps if after all you would n't better hire a man to do the job. Unworthy idea! The saw rebelled at that shirking spirit, and went awry for a dozen strokes. You can count your failures and your successes as plainly as if they were written in Arabic numbers, on the end of your sticks. They are the witnesses of your worth as a sawyer of wood.

It is when I have finished my morning stint of sawing wood that I am bland, approachable, and full of benevolence toward the world and my fellow men. Have I not just cause to be satisfied with myself? I have sawed my wood. It may rain this afternoon; tomorrow it may snow. I have done my stint. I am proud of that dull acclaim in the muscles of my back, for did not I come by it honestly, and have I not tangible results to show?

Then, of course, there is wood to be split. I confess that splitting wood has something of brilliance, of vivacity, that sawing lacks. Hence, I conclude, by the good old Puritan reasoning, that sawing is better for my soul. There is something too exultant in sending the axe straight down the grain of a sawed stick; something too victorious for mere man to experience often without strutting. The frugal, steady homesteader is a sawyer; the hired man, fond of display and vagrant by nature, is your natural splitter. He takes no delight in the less spectacular exercise, for it is not his wood.

Not long ago, as I was singing the praises of sawing wood, perhaps a little injudiciously, in the presence of a neighbor of mine, he said sharply:—

'Don't rhapsodize to me about that beastly sawhorse; I had to saw wood when I was a boy until my back was nearly broken, and I almost ran away from home.'

I am sorry for that man; and it is no Pecksniffian sorrow, either. It is good to saw wood; but it is not good to saw too much wood, or to saw a single stick under duress. I would not exchange a single minute of the satisfaction of my stint — no, not for the hours spent by kings; but if I were ordered out to my woodpile, to labor there as a sordid matter of dollars and cents, or at somebody's desire, I think *I* should be inclined to break the saw and run away. In short, I have no desire to saw *your* wood.

'LITTLE THINGS'

It is not the arguments and persuasions of the well-meaning that most often send the prodigal on his way back to the fatted calf and the robe and the ring of civilized life. It is much more frequently the haphazard vision of a stranger's lamp-lit hall, the glow of a kitchen fire seen through an area railing, that wakes the unbearable homesickness, and suddenly renders the swine and the husks detestable.

Those who have experienced great sorrow or great pain know that the sharpness of the first hideous impression soon blurs, gradually becomes vaguer and vaguer, and, when time has passed, it is one of the hardest sensations possible to re-create in the memory. Great sorrow and great joy transcend the ordi-

nary events of life too much to have an abiding place in a thing so small as a brain, — unless, of course, they obsess it to the exclusion of everything else. More often, however, the large experiences become anchored to the brain — or the heart, or the soul, or wherever the individual prefers to locate his emotions — by means of the small details attendant upon them. A man does not remember exactly how he felt when the news of a disaster came and overwhelmed him; but he is not likely to forget the gesture and expression of the messenger who came to tell him about it, or the first terrible words with which the news was broken; and whenever he hears and sees them repeated in other circumstances, he will feel the same sick dread creep over him which he felt for the first time when the news was fresh.

It is in such cases as this that one feels the peculiar significance of the remark — 'little things are the devil,' though the truth of it is not a whole truth, for there are some little things which are very far removed from the devil, indeed. The things that are dear to us, for instance, — we nearly always call them 'little,' however unsuitable the epithet. One of the broadest and most unproportionately broad Airedale terriers of my acquaintance is frequently addressed as 'little dog,' while the gaunt and not altogether prepossessing lady of the Charlie's Aunt type is the 'dear child' of the man whose bride she was some forty years ago.

We love little things, we hate little things, we fear little things; our lives are knit up with little things from the time we are born to the day we die.

Big things draw us up to Heaven or crush us down to Hell. Little things live beside us on the earth, eat

and sleep with us, laugh and grumble with us, catch the early train with us, or make us miss it, irritate and appease us, — never let us alone for a minute.

That is why they are so much more important than the big things — the things that come only once in a way, at long intervals, and even then are nearly always the result of a hundred and one little things combined.

To be crushed by a large misadventure is natural, but to fall a victim to a series of petty misfortunes is humiliating. There are many who would prefer to break their necks once for all by falling off a mountain, rather than bruise their whole bodies and dislocate their tempers by the daily stumbling over a mole-hill. It is the little things that count, — the satisfaction of climbing Mount Olympus is a poor sort of attainment if the scores and scores of pleasant details which wait upon success be absent.

It is the fringe of a foam-flecked wave rippling through the edge of a sea-fog that sets us longing for the open sea. It is the sharp scent of azalea, sold in the street, that makes us wild for a game of pirates in the garden where we were children. It is the big things that blur and fade. It is the little things that bite their way into the memory as a red-hot needle bites its way into wood.

And that, perhaps, is the whole secret of the love and the hate we bear them, — these same insidious little things which so often pretend to hide themselves away in the background, when in reality they are the most important part of the whole picture.

THE LEFT-OVER EXPRESSION OF COUNTENANCE

THERE are certain humorous sidewalk observations that are open to one as a kind of compensation for having to elbow and jostle along the public ways. One of these is the trick people have of looking at you with the left-over remainders of the expression of face just bestowed on the companion with whom they are walking and talking. A pair of persons engaged in lively argument are approaching you. One of them is laying down the law with great vigor of facial and muscular gesture. At the moment of brushing by he glances at you, with the ferocious scowl of his fervid eloquence still puckering his features. You would think he was your bitterest foe. Of course it would have been opposed to the great law of economy of force to have relaxed and then puckered up again, just for the momentary meeting of another face. Perhaps his apparatus of facial expression is not agile enough to have accomplished the manœuvre, if he had tried.

Shortly after, you encounter Saccharissima and Dulcissima, chatting and laughing together as they come. They are entire strangers to you, but as you pass you receive a most captivating smile, — from both of them this time, as it happens, for both are talking at once. It produces an effect like those momentary streaks of warm air through which one suddenly walks on an autumn day.

Sometimes you get a mixed expression, with much the effect of a stream of warm and of cold water poured on the head at the same time. The eyes, which are the more mobile portion of the expressional ap-

paratus, will nimbly alter their look, at the instant of meeting you, to that freezing glance appropriate to the encounter of an un-introduced fellow-creature. The mouth, meanwhile, with its attendant cheek-curves, continues the companionable smile, thus bridging over the interruption, and allowing the conversation to go on, with its atmosphere unchanged.

Occasionally it happens, however, that the mixture was already in the original expression. We all know that blood-curdling look which passes between eminently civil people, wherein the eyes remain distant and stony, while the unfortunate mouth (which — for its sins, perhaps — always has to do the hypocrisy for the whole countenance) is forced to maintain an expansive mechanical smile. Thus I meet, of a morning, two middle-aged ladies engaged in polite exchange of views upon the weather. Rival boarding-house keepers, possibly. The effect now is quite complex. They are already wearing, for each other, the mixed expression referred to, and in glancing at you each infuses an additional drop of vitriol into the ocular and adjustable part of her look.

This momentary contact with expressions that were intended for other people is singularly noticeable on the road in meeting open carriages. Sometimes on a crisp afternoon, when everybody is out and all are animated, it is like encountering an intermittent running fire of faces: some real rifle-shots (such as Emerson describes), and with explosive bullets at that; others, the mere sugar-plum artillery of the Carnival, — and none of them intended for you particularly. It is merely that you happen to intervene in the line of fire. An effect of this sort is when two crowded open horse-cars meet and pass. Here you have, not single

shots, but the simultaneous discharge of a whole battery of diverse facial howitzers.

Perhaps the oddest case of this persistence of previous expressions is where you have stopped a moment to speak with a lady on a village sidewalk. You are only slightly acquainted, and neither your mutual relation nor the business in hand calls for anything but a very indifferent and matter-of-fact cast of countenance. But suddenly, in the middle of a sentence, this daughter of Eve is aware of a favorite young gentleman bowing and smiling from a rapidly passing carriage. Without moving her head, — there is not time for that, — but only her eyes, she flashes on her vanishing friend a bewitchingly intimate smile. Then she instantly looks back to you and finishes the business sentence, with the remains of this charming but now queerly incongruous glance fading out of her face in a most interesting manner. It is like watching the last tint of sunset vanishing from a mountain peak, or a pretty little wave ebbing back on the beach, or the closing of a flower at night, or the putting up of the shutters on the village apothecary shop at bed-time.

I remember an appalling instance of such a phenomenon that occurred to me when a child. Even at this late day, whenever I vividly recall the scene, it gives me a chill. It was in a Virgil class, and I was a poor little palpitating new scholar. While I was anxiously construing the opening lines of the Dido-in-the-storm episode, the beetle-browed master turned slyly to a privileged older pupil with some *sotto voce* schoolmaster's joke. As I glanced up, having partly heard the words without catching the point, he was just turning back to me, with a most genial and winning smile sweetening his usually acid features. Innocently,

and no doubt with some timidly responsive look on my face, I said, 'What?' But on the instant of speaking I divined that, alas! the grin was not meant for me. It was a case of left-over remainder. As it ceased to 'coldly furnish forth' his rapidly congealing countenance, he bade me in a stern voice to 'go on.' It was much as if he had cried, 'What right have *you* to be smiling at me, you miserable little sinner?'

But I have known over-sensitive persons of larger growth to have their disagreeable moments with these 'remainder biscuits' of expression. For example, I have an unhappy friend who has all his life been intermittently ridden with the idea that he is in some way ridiculous. I can never find him really happy and at his ease except in his library or his garden. The books and the chickens, he says, do not laugh at him. Whether it be the effect on his nerves of tea-drinking, or of living too much alone, or of having been brought up by homespun people, to whom his artistic tastes really did appear ridiculous, and who took no pains to conceal the fact, — whatever the cause, there is nothing of which he has such terror as the 'laughter of fools' directed against himself. Lately I set myself seriously to combat this fancy. I said, 'Let us go out together on the street, or into company, and see if you can show me any reliable instances of people's laughing at you.'

The first persons we happened to encounter, after leaving the house, were two sauntering schoolgirls, satchels on arm, maxillaries active, and one was telling the other with infinite secrecy — as if the very lamp-posts were sure to be listening — some wonderful experience, such as only schoolgirls have. As my friend and I approached them, it appeared that the

climax of the narrative had just been reached. Glancing up at us unconsciously, as we met, they continued to giggle, and passed on. 'There! you see!' said my friend. And I had much ado to convince him that it was only a case of left-over expression.

ON NOSES

PEOPLE are constantly remarking that they observe this or that feature of the human face more than the others. Most generally it is the eyes that thus command attention; frequently the mouth. Occasionally some one will be found who declares that he notices hands first and chiefly; and I know at least one man (not in the shoe business) who vows that the foot is the most characteristic and significant portion of the human frame. I may add that he married on this theory. He is not happy.

For myself I must confess to a divided love. The eyebrow is a fascinating feature, which, by having its direction turned a hair's breadth, or its distance from the eyes altered by a fraction of an inch, can change the expression of the whole countenance. The ear has a humor of its own, and can delight or amuse by its angle, its size, and its texture; or by its position on the head can add distinction to the profile, or remove every vestige of it. But of all the neglected and unsung features the nose has the fewest lovers. It occupies the central position, it covers the largest territory, it shows the most amazing variety. Yet it shares the fate of all obvious and unchanging things, however necessary and important. It is ignored, or passed over with a reference to its size and its general direction.

I have read that no poem was ever written to a nose.

Can you, offhand, recall a single rapturous or even admiring description of one? I search my memory in vain, but produce instead one instance that has always interested me by its neglect. You recall that little poem of Browning's, 'A Face,' the brief and charming description of a girl's profile against a background of gold. The 'matchless mould' of softly parted lips, the neck 'three fingers might surround,' and the 'fruit-shaped, perfect chin' all receive their due of praise; the nose, a seeming necessity in any profile, is not even mentioned. It may be as well; each reader supplies in the lovely face the line that suits him best. The poet may have feared that by its mere mention he would produce the effect too often given by the nose in real life — a heaviness that mars an otherwise charming face.

Two reasons occur to me why the nose is thus treated as mere background. In the first place, it is always the same. It may show character or give a certain permanent expression to the face, but that expression cannot change. A few gifted noses may be able to show contempt or anger, a very few fortunate individuals can wrinkle their noses in amusement or disgust, but with most of us it is a wooden and unresponsive feature. It gives our faces in youth a certain character, — of *hauteur*, perhaps, or cheerful *insouciance*, — and that expression we carry to our graves. The falling away of the cheek may bring the nose into prominence, the sinking of the mouth may bring it nearer to the chin; still its character remains the same. We look at the eyes and mouth for response to our thought. They reveal the emotions of the present and record those of the past; but the nose, like the steady hero, is too unchanging to be interesting. After

a passing look we ignore its existence, and forget that it has gone far to determine the meaning of the face.

There is a sadder reason for our neglect, — that beautiful noses are so rare. Lovely eyes you will find a-plenty, and though finely cut mouths are scarcer, it will be a strange day when you do not see several. But the discovery of a really beautiful nose is an event of a lifetime. I myself have found exactly seven. And yet I consider myself catholic in my taste for noses: I can enjoy a nose for its mere expressiveness, whether it is aggressive, or aristocratic, or humorous. But it is amazing how seldom this feature really satisfies the eye. The bridge may be too thick or too high; the line from the forehead too abrupt or too severely straight. More often a nose that is really promising in its beginning fails in the end. It keeps on too long or not long enough, while the tip finds a dozen ways to err, and a fine nostril is rarely seen. In our typical American faces, overcrowded with features as our houses are with furniture, the nose is commonly disproportionately large.

But your really beautiful nose is a delight in every way. It is as far from sharpness as from coarseness. It shows strength without obtrusiveness, delicacy without fastidiousness, breeding without arrogance. It suggests humor, spirit, and daring. But I tell you candidly that there are not more than a hundred such in the four million noses of New York. You are lucky when one happens to come your way.

I should be ungrateful if I did not tell what first set me off on my observation of noses. It was a statement of Hazlitt's in his well-known description of Coleridge. Hazlitt, himself a painter and a wonderfully keen observer, speaks thus: 'His nose, the rud-

der of the face, the index of the will, was small, feeble, nothing.' Is it true that the nose is the index of the will? I immediately set to work to observe for myself. But after a good many years of observation, I must confess to no definite conclusion. If I have occasionally *almost* decided that it was true, I have at once received a knock-down blow from a nose the size of a button. On the whole I incline to the view that Hazlitt, being himself the possessor of a large nose, had delusions on the subject. But I welcome fresh evidence as time goes on.

BENEFICENT EFFECTS OF THE EARTH'S SPHERICITY

It occurred to me suddenly, this morning, that I had never been appropriately thankful for the sphericity of the earth. In truth, I had never given the subject any considerable thought. Enough that the earth *was* a sphere! Now, however, I began all at once to imagine how different our human lot and condition might be, were the planet, as some have dreamed, nothing but a square flat surface. In that case, it is evident that only a very small proportion of us who inhabit it could possibly be accommodated near the centre, — if I may be allowed to express myself thus ungeometrically. By far the greater number would necessarily find ourselves at long distances from it, while not a few would have to seek quarters along the edges, or be tucked away in some one of the four corners. And this difficulty would be not lessened, but rather quadrupled, if the earth were a cube, instead of only one side of a cube. In either event, the world would have the disadvantages of an ordinary rectan-

gular concert-room, in which the principal part of the audience must perforce take up with poorer seats than they see some of their fellow-auditors enjoying. Human nature remaining as it is, it is plain enough what jealousy and strife such inequalities would occasion. How would *you* feel, most meek and amiable of readers, to be rooted for life in some outlying district, some edge or corner of the world?

All such unhappy complications, it will be at once perceived, are forever obviated by the simple fact of the planet's rotundity; for there is no spot upon its surface but is just as near the centre as is every other spot. Indeed, every spot *is* the centre; not of the globe itself, to be sure, but of its superficial area. Not a soul of all earth's millions but has the nadir plumb beneath his feet, and the zenith directly above his head; not one but is at the fixed point, the true axis, about which the sphere's circumference is described. There is no village, no hamlet, no lonely hut, but the horizon stretches around it in a perfect ring. Straight to that village, hamlet, or hut all the radii run. To recur to our former comparison, the practical, equalizing effect of this is like what would result if a concert-room were circular, with the performers at the centre, and the listeners in a single annular row about them, every chair just as near the stage as every other.

This view of the matter I do not remember ever to have seen so much as hinted at, and I am therefore inclined to believe the foregoing observations strictly original; but, like many other discoveries, this of mine will doubtless seem simple and easy enough as soon as it is once pointed out. Moreover, there can be no question that the fact itself has all along unconsciously yet strongly affected the opinions and feelings

of the entire human family. Who ever saw a man, no matter how uneducated, that did not appear to realize, as if by instinct, that his own standing-place was the true centre of all things? I, for one, never did; and I have often been profoundly impressed with this universal consciousness of personal centrality, particularly when I have been traveling. The train halts for a minute at some rural station, with half a dozen scattered houses in sight, while as many rustics stand about the 'depot' gazing into the car windows. These lookers-on always appear to be commiserating the sad condition of us travelers. They are at home; they feel it. The rest of us are pilgrims and strangers. Poor souls! we have perhaps never before heard of Huckleberryville. Our abiding places, if indeed we have any, must be far off in foreign parts. We are here at the focus of the world for a minute only; then, like the Wandering Jew, off we must hurry again toward the outer rim. Happy citizens of Huckleberryville! did they but know it, the citizens of Boston and New York cherish precisely the same feelings. They, too, are at the hub. As for Huckleberryville, it is a town up country somewhere, not far from the 'jumping-off place,' they believe.

Now, if all these self-satisfied people were under a delusion, it would be pitiful to think of; but as we have seen, they have abundant reason for their self-gratulations. And to me, I must acknowledge, it is extremely consoling to find one of my most natural and indestructible convictions put thus upon an assured mathematical basis. My notion might have proved a mere superstition, a piece of ignorant conceit; but no! it is demonstrable, irrefutable fact. Henceforth, then, I give over attempting to appear unconscious of my

exalted destiny and privilege. If I *am* at the centre of the universe, why not recognize the fact, and carry myself accordingly?

THE ROUND WORLD

I HAVE a neighbor, a man now over eighty years of age, who has a philosophy of his own about most things, and who does not believe that the earth is round or that it turns round; and he can prove it to you, to his own satisfaction, with his level on the floor. I confess I sympathize with him, and half hoped he could prove it to me, as I am turned topsy-turvy every time I try to see myself on a round globe; but I am also bound to confess that he did not quite convince me.

I fancy that all persons who think much about the matter have trouble to adjust their notion of a round world to their actual experience. After we have sailed round the world and seen its round shape eclipsing the moon, and seen the ships drop below the horizon at sea, we still fail to see ourselves (at least I do) as living on the surface of a sphere; by no force of imagination can I do so. The eye reports only a boundless plain, diversified by hills and mountains; and travel we never so far, we cannot find the under side of the sphere — we can never see ourselves as we see the house-fly crawling over the side of the globe in our room, and we wonder why we do not drop off or see the sky beneath us. Yet when we reach the South Pole, the sky is still overhead, the same as at the North. This is the contradiction that staggers our senses.

The truth is that, as dwellers upon the earth, we are

completely under the law of her sphere, so completely that we cannot get away from it even in imagination, without seeing ourselves involved in a world of hopeless contradictions. The law of the sphere is that there is no up and no down, no over and no under, no rising and no falling, apart from itself. Away from the earth, in empty sidereal space, we should be absolutely lost, and should not know whether we were right-side-up or not, standing on our heads or our heels, because we must experience a negation of all direction as we know it here. We might know our right hand from our left hand, but can we picture to ourselves whether we should be falling up or falling down, whether the stars should be over us or under us?

Or go to the other extreme, and fancy yourself at the centre of the earth; which way would your feet point, up or down? Which way would things fall? Try to think of the dilemma you would be in, if you could tunnel through the earth, when you came out on the other side! And what is curious about all this is that our experience with balls and spheres here does not prepare us for these contradictions. Every globe we see, even the sun and moon, has an upper and an under side. If we fancy ourselves on the moon we see the heavens above us at the North Pole, and below us at the South. Is not the fly crawling over the under side of the globe in our room in a reversed position? Yet we know from actual experience that, go where we will on the earth's surface, we are right-side-up with care. We find no under side. The heavens are everywhere above us, and the ground is beneath us, and falling off the sphere seems and is impossible. We nowhere find ourselves in the position the Man in the Moon would appear to be in if we could see him

searching for the South Pole. South Pole and North Pole are both the same so far as our relation to them is concerned.

The size of the globe, be it little or big, cannot alter the law of the globe. If we were to make a globe ten miles or a hundred or a thousand miles in diameter, it would still have a top and a bottom side, and if we placed the figure of a man at the South Pole his head would point down and we should have to tie him on.

When we get a flying-machine that will take us to the moon, I shall want to alight well up on the top side for fear I shall fall off. In fact, landing on the under side would seem a physical impossibility. I try to fancy how it would seem if we could alight there. Of course, the sky would still be overhead and we should look up to that bigger moon, the earth, from which we had just come on an upward flight. We go up to the moon or to Mars, and we turn round and look up to the point of our departure! It is the apparent contradiction that I cannot adjust my mind to. That up and down, over and under, can be abolished, that they are only forms of our experience, and that out in sidereal space they would have no meaning — that is something hard for us to realize. We apprehend it without comprehending it. Are all our notions thus relative? The globe is bigger than our minds. We cannot turn the cosmic laws round in our thoughts. We are adjusted to the sphere, not it to us.

If the moon were to break from its orbit and fall to the earth, its course would be downward, like that of the shooting stars. How would it seem to people on the moon, if there were people there?

This sense of contradiction that we feel in trying

to adjust our minds to the idea of a round world, may be analogous to the difficulty we have in trying to reach an intellectual concept of the universe as a whole. Our minds are so constituted and disciplined by our experience that we look for the causes of every event or thing. We make a chain of causes, the end of which we never reach. A causeless event, or thing, we cannot think of any more than we can think of a stick with only one end. God is unthinkable, because He is causeless.

We cannot penetrate the final mystery of things, because behind every mystery is another mystery. What causes life? What started evolution? Why are you and I here? Who or what ordered the world as we see it? We cannot help asking these questions, though we see when we try to take the first step that they are unanswerable. When we find the end of the under side of the sphere, we may hope to answer them. There is no ending, and no beginning; there is no limit to space or to time, though we make our heads ache trying to think how such can be the case. There is no final Cause in any sense that comes within the range of our experience in this world. We are prisoners of the sphere on which we live, and its bewildering contradictions are reflected in our mental lives as well.

AMENITIES OF STREET-CAR TRAVEL

SEEING and hearing so much of the disagreeables of street-car travel, you are apt to forget the other side unless you stop occasionally and think of the pleasure which you really have found in the cars; and which, found there amid the prevailing monotony

and stupidity, assumes unwonted importance, and adds materially to the little amenities of life on which such a deal of everyday cheerfulness and satisfaction depends.

It is a rainy, gloomy day, — wet clothing, dismal faces, a finished paper; you have read the signs till you hate pickles and soap, and you loathe the title, even, of 'the most successful book of the year.' Suddenly you catch the man opposite you smiling; you wonder what he can see. You follow his gaze: there is a woman and a baby. The woman may be frowzy, the baby not clean; but look again! A movement of the infant causes the woman to glance down at it, lying on her arm. The tired look vanishes from her face, and there comes the gaze of motherhood, — the one universal loveliness common to all womankind. For be she beautiful or ugly, good or bad, rich or poor, refined or its opposite, no woman is incapable of this holy look. In all it is the same, — the expression of the Divine in humanity, the expression of the one feeling which it is given to humankind to share with the Eternal Creator, — love for that helpless thing which is of *me* and from *me*, which lives only because *I am*. Every one in the car recognizes this look, and reflects it to a faint degree in his own face. Look about you, and you will see that this is so. Think of your own face, and you will feel a change, a slight softening of the muscles' strain.

The effect produced by an older child is not so subtle, but it is none the less modifying to the general boredom. As usual the car was monotonously commonplace. A cherub child and his mother arrived. The child proceeded to knee the seat, slightly to the discomfort of his neighbor. But he soon began to ex-

claim at the sights, and, patting his mother's face (whereat wistfulness appeared on many a watching face), to whisper audibly in her ear. Every one keyed up a bit, and the proud mother light shone in the woman's face at the signs of interest in her child. A small cat chanced to run across the street. The child was in ecstasies and rattled on: 'Oh, mamma, is n't that a lovely little kitty? is n't she sweet? is n't she dear? is n't she the *damnedest* little cat you ever saw?' Thereafter that ride was a delight to all of us. And this is only an example; children are always potential, though perhaps few would appeal so neatly to a carful of men.

Then, too, look at the faces in a car in which there is a crowd of boys going to the circus, or a picnic, or other good time; or a lot of girls going to a dance; and who shall say we are not open to the blandishments of youth, and that even a street car may not be 'amenitive'?

Another sign is the almost universal stir at the entrance of a baby-laden woman, of an old person, or of a cripple. We may be selfish and read our papers, but, as a rule, we do keep the tail of our eye out for the helplessness of youth or age or infirmity.

Of the less worthy pleasures, hardly amenities, is the overhearing of gossip, criticisms of the play and of clothes; the disposition of an awkward bag or the undoing of a bundle. Then, sometimes, there is the sudden brightness and perfume of flowers, and an occasional live animal.

And I confess that it is to me of the amenities to see a conductor with clean hands or a clean collar. Not that he is to be blamed or wondered at if both are extremely dirty; but if they, either or both, chance

to be clean, he *is* to be wondered at and admired. So you meditate on that inborn cleanliness which neither money nor the street will destroy, — on the why and the wherefore; you plan epigrams; and by means of a clean conductor your ride has become the induction to an amenity, and maybe the inspiration of a 'contribution.'

RAIN

Is there any other force in nature that has so varied and changing a beauty as rain? Anywhere in town or country one can take sheer delight in watching those drifting, swaying threads of liquid which make all sorts of fantastic angles. Sometimes the heavy rains come down with perpendicular directness, falling insistently in exact parallels; sometimes the lines are slanting and follow the direction of the wind with singularly plastic movement, veering and shifting until they are almost vertical; sometimes all uniformity of movement vanishes, and the rain is blown in sharp gusts until its delicate filaments become entangled in intricate, bewildering complexities of moisture.

Rain keeps to the straight line and to the angle when in action; it seldom, if ever, yields to the curve. It is only when rain ceases and becomes mere drops that linger on the eaves, or fall with inconceivable slowness from the edge of glistening green leaves, that we see gracious and trembling curves. The size of a raindrop may vary from a tiny bead of light to the more palpable globes in which one could easily study liquid geometry. I have seen, on icy days, raindrops clinging to bare bushes, making them in the distance look like pussy-willows.

Rain has color. The Quaker gray of a hard rain has a soft vanishing quality far less durable and tangible than the filmy cobweb. Sometimes almost white, often blue, most frequently rain responds with unusual sensitiveness to its environment, and shadows back the green of apple-tree leaves or the sombre brown of a dusty highway. Most beautiful is the silvery sheen of rain on warm summer days when the descent is intermittent and one has the pleasure of speculating on the quality of the rain to be. The poets have a great deal to say about golden rain, but that falls only in the Golden Age; we see only that clear crystalline rainfall against a glowing golden sunset in April.

All the world knows the poignant smell accompanying a summer shower, when dust is moistened, when parched grass yields a certain acrid scent under the stress of storm. The fresh vigor and brilliancy of roses and of yellow lilies, after rain, is proverbial; but for exquisite beauty of fragrance I know nothing that compares with the aromatic, mystical influence of a blossoming balm-of-gilead, rain-swept.

The soft thud and patter of rain upon the roof are as musical to the imaginative listener as is any symphony. Monotonous dripping on thick-leaved trees soothes one's weariness, and makes the importunities of life seem easily resisted. One can be lulled to fair visions during a transient spring shower, and gain a sense of sharing the destiny of nature. But, sometimes, the storm brings moods far from serene when it sweeps along with a kind of fury. Heavy clouds make noon as dark as night, the air is thick and ominous, rain pours in sheets of gray that gusts of wind shake into fine mist. Trees bow to the ground under

the rush of the whirlwind, and thunder reverberates continually, while often a sharp flash of lightning gives a sudden golden tint to the heavy rain and shows the blackness of the sky. There is something startling and fearful in the tumult of the storm; it is as if the laws of nature had broken loose and left the titanic elements to have full swing. Still it is beautiful, a picture in chiaroscuro, illuminated by the unearthly flame of lightning. There is a wild and awful sublimity in the tremendous power which has wrought such darkness and floods of water, such breathless silence and responding crash and whirl.

ON SHOWER-BATHS

THERE is no reason to doubt that the shower-bath in its natural and original condition was the first method of ablution practised by prehistoric man. The first rainstorm that overtook him on the way back from his earliest dinosaur-hunting trip did that. He was favorably clothed, he was assuredly warm, and the shower was undoubtedly pleasant. After that we feel sure he told his wife, and at the next wet spell they had a shower party with the man in the cave above and his family, and the system of fun and sanitation received its impetus toward popularity. There was nothing fearsome about it. Compared with it, the first plunge into a pool was as terrifying as the first broiled lobster or shrimp salad.

There is something rudimentary and fundamental about having the water splashed down upon one, and getting completely and deliciously wet. Not damp, not moist, but wet, wringing wet. You yourself when a child never enjoyed anything so much as your first

drenching in an unforeseen and unavoidable rainstorm, — the thrill of being wet, the cool drive of the water on your nose, into your sleeves, and down your neck; and the joyous shush of soaked, water-logged boots. Even the tedium of being rubbed with alcohol, bundled up, and warned you would catch your death, did not diminish the event. You voted it better than the time you fell off the boat-dock; it lasted longer.

Since then the jolly feeling of wet clothes has been atrophied, owing largely to the clothes themselves. The thought of one's watch, of stamps all sticking together, of shoes stuffed with newspapers, of the absence of favorite trousers and coat while undergoing pressing, take away the *insouciance* of it. But on the rare occasions when you have no excuse, and when it is pardonably unavoidable and extenuated, it is fun.

And has mankind taken the hint of nature in splashing water upon itself? Not in the least. In the intended way water was impelled against the body with no effort on the part of the body except its presence. Now we get the water and impel the body into it. It is a lengthy and lazy process that gives one the feeling of having done something worth while, which is quite out of keeping with the purely routine spirit of the thing.

Take the Roman bath, — about as exciting a pastime as playing in a fountain with the spray out of order. Take the English system, now happily on the wane, of striking postures, peculiarly Chabas in character, in an enlarged shirred-egg dish, and praying that there is not a plastered ceiling in the room below. Take that extravagant Americanism, the porcelain tub. In its maximum splendor its architecture resembles most the marble sarcophaguses of the Early Christians, seen

strewn about the basilicas of Rome, and greatly admired by archæologists, but purely as tombs.

Here and there a shower-bath has crept wistfully into a private house, but usually as a minor accessory to the sarcophagus. A tall white-clothed thing startles you in the dark from its semblance to a wraith emerging from the porcelain tomb. And a bath in it gives one the cheering and sticky sensation of having taken a shower in a shroud. It presents a possibility, but not a pleasure.

No, the home of the true shower-bath is the country club. Reduced to its lowest terms, a country club is a golf course, a tennis court, a bar, and a shower-bath. And you can omit the tennis court before eliminating the shower-bath. After that deuce set of tennis, those extra three holes of golf to decide the drinks, it is late; dinner is waiting, perhaps the wife, and a long way into town. Cleanliness, coolness, and celerity are needed, and we find them in the tubulous personality of the shower.

We who have made the rounds of country clubs, including those with Indian names, have learned to distinguish the different models, — the kind that droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven, the kind that pelts you at variable angles from the front, and the kind that attacks with vehemence from all sides. But to get the best results one must know the idiosyncrasies of one's particular machine. A transient operator at a dozen clubs during the summer finds that success in showers is not uniform. At a country club it is quite as necessary to be a good mixer in a shower, as it is on the golf course, or in the bar.

To know by instinct the hot-water throttle is the study of a lifetime; we have never been able to sense

it ourselves when not marked, and sometimes even if marked. And once in a modern bath in eternal if torrid Rome, we would have given much to know that *calda* did not mean cold, as we phonetically decided that it should. We have often wondered, in this connection, notwithstanding the expense, if a shower-chauffeur would not prove a proper installment at country clubs. For not once in a hundred times can one experience a well-spaced gamut from cleansing hot to invigorating cold that leaves nothing to be desired.

Besides the individual influence there is a broader sociological importance to a shower-bath. It develops many things in the average man. First of all, self-confidence. It takes much personal reliance to step nonchalantly into a shower with your roll-top-desk and one-day-a-week-tennis development, just as a last year's football player emerges in muscular radiance from it. And what restraint and verbal repression it fosters as you yourself come out and find that the same young athlete has ensnared the last towel!

But, of all things, voice-culture is what it assuredly stimulates best. He sings in a shower-bath who never sang before. Some are more melodious in warm water than in cold, but all are universally vocal. Mute inglorious Scottis are not mute in shower-baths, and many a noiseless tenor under the persuasive influence of a stream of water out-phonographs a graphophone. And in this way we often arrive at the true inner man. The professor of Greek in the high school ecstatically sings the latest ragtime success; the golf champion of last year warbles, from memory, a *leitmotiv* from *Tristan und Isolde*. Repertoires are endless as the water splashes — and as diverse as the men themselves.

And thus we have the shower-bath. In it sparkles the light of the century, efficiency; the maximum of results, the minimum of effort. It approaches the acme of speed and effect. And the day will come when the porcelain tub will be relegated to companionship with the other archæological curiosities, including its archetype, the Roman sarcophagus. 'A cleanly race,' will comment the historian-to-come in considering this phase of our life, 'but considered in our light of universal showers, we wonder at the unnecessary work they made of it.'

TYPE IV

NATURE ESSAYS

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware.

To the familiar essayist, next after the poet, nature speaks her 'various language,' and none save the poet is more sensitive to her many voices and infinitely changing aspects. In her the essayist finds a mood to correspond with every mood of his mind. Nature is the complement, the setting and environment, of man's life. In certain moods, the essayist goes to her as she is and accepts the solace that only she can give. At another time, he invests her, through the pathetic fallacy, with human attributes, and sees in her either his friend or his enemy. Man is always pleased to take from nature just what he wishes and leave the rest. Too often, however, nature is looked upon carelessly by the ordinary person as little more than the commonplace, and is accepted as a matter of course; but to the poet, the painter, the essayist, and other nature lovers she is a friend, an ever-present, endlessly interesting comrade.

The mood of the essayist usually suggests the aspect of nature that he shall choose for his essay. When he is tired, alone, and dispirited, the song of a bird may

be interpreted by him as an expression of sympathy from his feathered friend. As he gazes into the eyes of his dog or his horse, he may marvel at the intelligence and longing that he perceives there, and find himself yearning for a more perfect means of communication between himself and his dumb comrades. As a convalescent, he may psychologize regarding the inner consciousness of his friends the humming bird, the butterfly, and the bee, that sip daintily the sweets from the flowers that his human friends have sent him. He may even speculate concerning the sentiency of the flowers themselves. As he treads upon a spider, he may fall to wondering as to what is the basis of man's likes and antipathies relative to certain insects. Musing in a similar strain, Burns wrote his delightful lyrics, 'To a Mountain Daisy,' 'To a Mouse,' and 'To a Louse.' He may sympathetically chronicle the ups and downs, the comedies and tragedies in animal life. If he be possessed of a nature-lover's patience, he may watch with his reading glass the progress and be deeply impressed by the dreadful carnage of a battle between rival colonies of ants, as did Thoreau before he wrote his 'Battle of the Ants.' Observation of his barnyard fowls may remind the essayist of the similarity existing between chickens and human beings. Even the fly that sits on the hand of the writer as it traces the words on the page may suggest an interesting topic for an essay. Writing under the spell cast by the enchantment of deep, silent forests, the author may produce an essay that is little short of genuine poetry. And though winter has been stern and cold and disagreeable, the lament of the essayist at winter's departure is sincere. The great number of poems and essays that have been written on nature and man's

regard for nature indicate the interest that the subject holds for mankind. The familiar essay, since it is a literary prose form that accurately and delicately reflects man's varying moods, is almost as well adapted as the lyric to the expression of the essayist's reflections on all the aspects of nature.

BUTTERFLY PSYCHOLOGY

It happened to me once to spend a long summer afternoon under a linden-tree, reading *Middlemarch*. The branches were loaded with blossoms, and the heavy perfume attracted the bees from far and near, insomuch that my ears were all the time full of their humming. Butterflies also came, though in smaller numbers, and silently. Whenever I looked up from my book I was sure to find at least one or two fluttering overhead. They were mostly of three of our larger sorts, — the Turnus, the Troilus, and the Archippus (what noble names!), beautifully contrasted in color. The Turnus specimens were evidently the remnant of a brood which had nearly passed away; their tattered wings showed that they had been exposed to the wear and tear of a long life, as butterflies reckon. Some of them were painful to look at, and I remember one in particular so maimed and helpless that I got up from my seat and stepped upon it. It seemed an act of mercy to send the wretched cripple after its kindred. As I looked at these loiterers, with their frayed and faded wings, — some of them half gone, — I found myself, almost before I knew it, thinking of Dorothea Brooke, of whose lofty ideals, bitter disappointments, and partial joys I was reviewing the story. After all, was there really any wide difference between the two lives? One was longer, the other shorter; but only as one dewdrop outlasts another on the grass.

> A moment's halt, a momentary taste
> Of Being from the well amid the waste,

And lo! the phantom caravan has reach'd
The Nothing it set out from.

Then I fell to musing, as I had often done before, upon the mystery of an insect's life and mind.

This tiger swallow-tail, that I had just trodden into the ground, — what could have been its impressions of this curious world whereinto it had been ushered so unceremoniously, and in which its day had been so transient? A month ago, a little more or a little less, it had emerged from its silken shroud, dried its splendid party-colored wings in the sun, and forthwith had gone sailing away, over the pasture and through the wood, in quest of something, it could hardly have known what. Nobody had welcomed it. When it came, the last of its ancestors were already among the ancients. Without father or mother, without infancy or childhood, it was born full-grown, and set out, once for all, upon an independent adult existence. What such a state of being may be like, let those imagine who can.

It was born adult, I say; but at the same time it was freer from care than the most favored of human children. No one ever gave it a lesson or set it a task. It was never restrained or reproved; neither its own conscience nor any outward authority ever imposed the slightest check upon its desires. It had nobody's pleasure to think of but its own; for as it was born too late to know father or mother, so also it died too soon to see its own offspring. It made no plans, needed no estate, was subject to no ambition. Summer was here when it came forth, and summer was still here when it passed away. It was born, it lived upon honey, it loved, and it died. Happy and brief biography!

Happy and brief, but what a multitude of questions are suggested by it! Did the creature know anything of its preëxistence, either in the chrysalis or earlier? If so, did it look back upon that far-away time as upon a golden age? Or was it really as careless as it seemed, neither brooding over the past, nor dreaming of the future? Was it aware of its own beauty, seeing itself some day reflected in the pool as it came to the edge to drink? Did it recognize as poor relations, smaller butterflies — the white and the yellow, and even the diminutive 'copper' — felicitating itself, meanwhile, upon its own superior size, its brilliant orange-red eye-spots, and its gorgeous tails? Did it mourn over its faded broken wings as age came on, or when an unexpected gust drove it sharply against a thorn? Or was it enabled to take every mischance and change in a philosophical spirit, perceiving all such evils to have their place in the order of nature? Was it frightened when the first night settled down upon it, — the horrible black darkness, that seemed to be making a sudden end of all things? As it saw a caterpillar here and there, did it ever suspect any relationship between the hairy crawling thing and itself; or would it have been mortally offended with any profane lepidopteran Darwin who should have hinted at such a possibility?

The Antiopa butterfly, according to some authorities a near relative of the tiger swallow-tail, has long been especially attractive to me because of its habit of passing the winter in a state of hibernation, and then reappearing upon the wing before the very earliest of the spring flowers. A year ago, Easter fell upon the first day of April. I spent the morning out-of-doors, hoping to discover some first faint tokens of a resurrection. Nor was I disappointed. In a sunny

stretch of the lonely road, I came suddenly upon five of these large 'mourning-cloaks,' all of them spread flat upon the wet gravel, sucking up the moisture while the sun warmed their wings. What sight more appropriate for Easter! I thought. These butterflies had died in October, and this very morning had come to life again.

Then, as before under the linden-tree, I fell to wondering. What were they thinking about, these creatures so lately born from the dead? Did they remember their last year's existence? And what could they possibly make of this brown and desolate world, so unlike the lingering autumnal glories amid which, five or six months ago, they had 'fallen asleep'? Perhaps they had been dreaming. In any event, they could have no idea of the ice and snow, the storms and the frightful cold, through which they had passed. It was marvelous how such frail atoms had withstood such exposure; yet here they were, as good as new, and so happily endowed that they had no need to wait for blossoms, but could draw fresh life from the very mire of the street.

This last trait, so curiously out of character, as it seems to us, suggests one further inquiry: Have butterflies an æsthetic faculty? They appreciate each other's adornments, of course. Otherwise, what becomes of the accepted doctrine of sexual selection? And if they are pleased with each other's beauty, what is to hinder our believing that they enjoy also the bright colors and dainty shapes of the flowers on which they feed? As I came out upon the veranda of a summer hotel, two or three friends exclaimed: 'Oh, Mr. ——, you should have been here a few minutes ago; you would have seen something quite in your

line. A butterfly was fluttering over the lawn, and, noticing what it took for a dandelion, it was just settling down upon it, when behold, the dandelion moved, and proved to be a goldfinch!' Evidently the insect had an eye for color, and was quite like one of us in its capacity for being deceived.

To butterflies, as to angels, all things are pure. They extract honey from the vilest of materials. But their tastes and propensities are in some respects the very opposite of angelic, being, in fact, thoroughly human. All observers must have been struck with their quite Hibernian fondness for a shindy. Two of the same kind seldom come within hail of each other without a little set-to, just for sociability's sake, as it were; and I have seen a dozen or more gathered thickly about a precious bit of moist earth, all crowding and pushing for place in a manner not to be outdone by the most patriotic of office-seekers.

It is my private heresy, perhaps, this strong anthropomorphic turn of mind which impels me to assume the presence of a soul in all animals, even in these airy nothings; and, having assumed its existence, to speculate as to what goes on within it. I know perfectly well that such questions as I have been raising are not to be answered. They are not meant to be answered. But I please myself with asking them, nevertheless, having little sympathy with those precise intellectual economists who count it a waste to let the fancy play with insoluble mysteries. Why is fancy winged, I should like to know, if it is never to disport itself in fields out of which the clumsy, heavy-footed understanding is debarred?

WOODLAND MYSTERIES

THE only haunted house I was ever in was one not made with hands. It had been built I know not how many generations before the birth of the oldest inhabitant, the architecture a mixture of Greek and Gothic. It had numerous porticoes, long colonnades, winding corridors, many inner courts, halls, and secret passages. Its partitions were of tapestry, sometimes closely woven and wholly impervious to the eye, but oftener of a sleazy embroidered fabric, which scarcely intercepted the arched and columnar vista. The carpets were of plush or velvet, the woof of which was so thrown up as to suppress all sound of footsteps. I have been often in this haunted house, have seen and heard much of its spiritings and sorceries, but am no more able now than at first to account for them; on the contrary, with every successive visit the mystery deepens, and my perplexity increases. I have to complain of the capricious treatment which I receive. On certain occasions I am made most welcome; bidden to ask all the questions that occur to me; entertained by all manner of pretty illusions and pageants; instructed in cabala and hieroglyph: and entrusted with the profoundest state secrets. The queen of all the hamadryads is faithful to the place and hour of tryst. Like the favored peasant youth in the ballad, I cry out,—

> Ye million leaves of the wildwood wist
> How Beauty Rohtraut's mouth I kissed!

The next time I go to the woods all is changed. I am treated with cold unfamiliarity; none admits my acquaintance; the humblest retainers and servants will

not deign to answer my civil questions; all gossip is hushed, or is carried on in confused whispers, unintelligible to me; the queen of the hamadryads laughs my pretensions to scorn. I beat a humiliating retreat, feeling baffled and misused.

With a comrade it is still the same.

We rove up and down the woods, snapping the flower from its stem, thrusting aside the branch and the brier. The squirrel barks at us like a sort of sylvan *canis minor;* the brooding bird starts away with an aggrieved and accusing cry; everything protests at our ruthless and unmannerly haste, our eagerness and curiosity. But let us sit down somewhere in the depths of the woods, quietly observant and grateful-minded, keeping our note-books in our pocket, since the powers that be here are marvelously close and conservative, and always distrustful of the interviewer. It is not long before we are the centre of an increasingly curious circle of spectators. The snappish squirrel comes back to look at us, silent and alert, but not inimical; the chipmunk darts down before us, and dives through his trap-door, giving us the impression that the devouring earth has made a clean morsel of him. The birds perch lower, eying us with not unfriendly glances; we even catch glimpses of that shy party-colored woodlander, the redstart, flitting among the branches overhead. It is so quiet that the slightest noise becomes significant and noteworthy.

My music is the buzzing of a fly,

as that droning insect sails in from the hot sunshine for a moment's cool refreshment. Or the wood-pewee, who is a strange little mystic, may be heard in some leafy recess urging its childish, unanswerable query, —

always with a rising inflection of voice, as though expecting to be answered by yes or no. So lorn and pathetic is the quality of this wood-note that we sometimes fancy the pewee, like the poet's nightingale, sings with its breast against a thorn.

The woods are full of mysterious stirs, even when there is no wind. A quick, rustling undulation among the low plants and vines hints that the timorous snake is making all haste to get out of our way. (Does the groveling creature think that we still hold the Adamic grudge?) There is no wind; so what can it be but black sorcery which keeps yonder leaf dancing like a dervish among its motionless and listless comrades? And what spirit of mischief lives in that clump of fern, to keep one lusty plume in continual oscillation? The fern, we would say, is the magician's own plant. Although we have never tested its occult powers on St. John's Eve, we should not be surprised if told that there are those who walk these woods, rendered invisible through its aid. A dense growth of ferns always puts us in mind of the South American tropics. A mystery lurks under the mandrake, also, whether in May it bears its subtly-fragrant white flower, or in August ripens its apple of mellow gold. A cluster of mandrakes crowning a knoll suggests a grove of dwarf palms, sheltering who knows what race of grotesque hop-o'-my-thumbs.

If the time be midsummer, we shall probably find in some warm hollow ground the pale waxen pipes of the monotropa. How uncanny is this plant, that has not one drop of green blood in its veins, no fragrance, not a leaf susceptible to the flattering zephyr! A flower brought up in the garden of night, under the rays of a gibbous moon, would look like this; and yet

there is sometimes a faint blush on its livid cheek, as though it had spied the dawn a long way off. There is no legend told of the monotropa, so we may assign one: say that some evil eye of the woods long ago cast its spell upon a fresh-blooming flower, changing it into the stark effigy of a flower.

In speaking of mythology we ordinarily qualify it as *ancient*, as though disclaiming participation in the error; but if the Pantheon had not descended to us, would we not have constructed it ourselves, at first hand? There is an implied myth, a paganish personification, in nearly all our allusions to nature. Within these common haunts of ours, how easy to recreate the whole race of woodland deities and genii! That is a pretty account of the popular origin of field and forest myths given in the Fourth Book of *The Excursion*. Swift alternations of sunshine and cloud shadows on the distant hills appeared as 'fleet oreads, sporting visibly.' Gnarled dead branches, projecting from a crag or starting out of deep woody shade, figured as Fauni and Panes. The herdsman, stretched out on the summer turf, if he happened to hear a sweet and distant music, instantly accredited it to Apollo's lute. Have we not seen and heard all these marvels? Or shall we admit that the imagination of Greek peasants in the old time was of a quicker and more generous order than our own?

We have said that the woods are haunted. Looking up through an opening in the dense leafy roof, what is that fine point of white light we see in the blue zenith? Surely, a star! After this revelation we feel that the woods are in Night's province, and jealously watched by her Argus eyes. That keen sentinel posted on the meridian is to us as thrilling a sur-

prise as a chance glimpse of Dian and her nimble attendants, seen or fancied by the superstitious forester of old.

It is in vain that we plunder the woods; all that we bring hence slips from our possession like coin picked up in fairy-land. This handful of wood-flowers, how frayed and pale, even common, when seen by the light of outside day! How drooping these ferns, how tawdry this moss! The truth is, the spirits of these are not with us, having parted from us when we left the woods; we carry away nothing but their poor remains. Thus the forest holds its own.

JONAS AND MATILDA

THEY were English, and their names were Jonas and Matilda; not their real names, of course, for though one often writes of real individuals, it is the custom to give them fictitous names. In this case I am obliged to use fictitious names, for though this couple lived next door to me for two seasons, I never found out their true names; so, in order to discuss their affairs in the privacy of my family, I christened them Jonas and Matilda. Their dwelling was not over twenty feet from my sitting-room window. It was quite old, but had never before, to my knowledge, been occupied; and when, one April morning, I saw a couple inspecting it with the evident intention of making it their residence if it proved satisfactory, I became much interested in the prospect of new neighbors.

I was somewhat of an invalid that spring, or thought I was, — which is much the same thing, as all physicians can testify, — and as I could neither read nor work long at a time, I welcomed the advent of the

newcomers as a pleasant break in watching the clock for medicine hours.

Several visits were made before the couple decided to make the place their local habitation, and I had my couch drawn close to the window, where, behind the friendly screen of the muslin curtains, I could see without being seen. Sometimes, when the discussion over the location became specially lively, I did not scruple to use my opera-glass. I may as well confess that, owing to the perfectly open way in which Jonas and Matilda conducted their domestic affairs, by keeping up a daily espionage assisted by the aforementioned glass, I became almost as familiar with their household concerns as with my own, and I can assure you I found them vastly more interesting.

From the very first Matilda showed herself a female of decided opinions, which she aired both in season and out of season. As for Jonas, he proved himself like charity: he bore all things, hoped all things, endured all things, did not behave himself unseemly, suffered long, and was kind. After at least a dozen visits, in which Matilda pointed out every disadvantage of the situation, to which Jonas only ventured to utter a mild protest now and then, they decided to take the place for the season. Then began the moving and settling. All the furnishings were new, and instead of going to look and select for herself, Matilda stayed at home and had everything brought for her inspection. When Jonas brought what he considered a piece of fine floor covering or wall decoration, she turned and twisted it in every conceivable way; and if, after thoroughly examining it, she decided it would do, she laid it down, and Jonas picked it up and fitted it into the house. This did not end the matter, however, for as soon as

Jonas came out and began to brush himself, Matilda would pop her head in the door; and if the thing was not arranged to her liking, she would drag it out, and patient Jonas had his work to do over again. A whole morning would often be spent in this way, Jonas putting in order and Matilda pulling to pieces some part of the furniture. When Jonas brought home anything that did not please Matilda, she would snatch it from him, run a short distance, and toss it into the air, so that it would fall over into my yard. Then he would find a choice dainty which he would offer her, and hasten away to get something else while she was for the moment apparently good-natured.

In the five weeks which it took Jonas to get the house in order, only once was he seen to rebel against Matilda's tyranny. It was a very hot, close morning, and he had been gone for at least two hours, during which time Matilda had done nothing but prance back and forth in front of the house. Whether the material itself did not please her, or she was angry because Jonas had been gone so long, I do not know, but as soon as he came in sight, with a sharp exclamation she pounced on him and tried to pull his burden away from him. To her great astonishment he refused to let go his hold. She moved away a little, and looked at him as if she could not believe the evidence of her own senses. Then she again caught hold of one end and tugged with all her might, but Jonas held on firmly; and thus they tugged and pulled for nearly five minutes. At last Matilda succeeded in wresting it from Jonas, and running with it endeavored to drop it into my yard; but Jonas was too quick for her, and caught it just as it was falling. Again they contended for its possession, without either gaining any advan-

tage, when suddenly Matilda let go her hold, and going off a little way sat down. Jonas unexpectedly finding himself the victor, seemed at first undecided what to do; but after waiting a minute and finding Matilda did not renew the attack, he carried the material into the house and fitted it in place. When he came out he waited, as was his custom, for Matilda to inspect his work, but the little minx never so much as looked toward the house.

After a while, Jonas went away. As soon as he was out of sight, Mistress Matilda ran to the house, and tore out not only what Jonas had just put in, but also several other things, and tossed them, one by one, into my yard. Then she too went away. Presently Jonas returned with more material for Matilda, but no Matilda was in sight. He called several times, and getting no response peeped into the house. I could not tell what his feelings were on beholding his dismantled home, for feelings cannot be seen even with an opera-glass; but after standing about for a while he laid his bundle down and hurried away, and I saw neither of them again for two days.

The second morning they returned together. Matilda seemed to be in a very peaceful frame of mind, for she allowed Jonas to repair the damage she had wrought and finish the furnishings without further interference. When it was all done she refused to go one step inside. Jonas coaxed and pleaded. He went in and out half a dozen times, and tried his best to persuade Matilda to enter; but no, she would not even cross the threshold. Finding all his entreaties of no avail, he went away, and returned with an elderly looking female, whom I took to be either an aunt or a mother-in-law. Then the two tried their united

eloquence, the elderly female talking as rapidly and volubly as a book agent, to induce the obstinate Matilda to set up housekeeping; but their breath was thrown away, — she refused to be persuaded. About a week later I saw Matilda skip into the house and out again in the greatest hurry. She tried this several days in succession, and after a while concluded that she might endure living in the house.

Just at this time I went into the country for a month; but on the evening of my return almost my first inquiry was for Jonas and Matilda. What was my surprise to learn that they had two babies! I thought that with looking after them and taking care of the house the little mistress would have no time to indulge any of her disagreeable characteristics; but I reckoned without knowing all about Matilda. I took a peep at my neighbors the next morning before I went down to breakfast, and what did I see, under the shade of a blossoming cherry-tree, but Matilda serenely taking the morning air as if she had not a care in the world, while the long-suffering Jonas sat in the door patiently feeding the babies!

Later reconnoitring revealed the fact that Jonas was still the commissary and general care-taker, and Matilda retained her old office of inspector-general; but now, instead of furnishings for the house it was supplies for the larder. Everything that Jonas brought home Matilda examined carefully, and if she considered it unfit food for the babies, promptly gobbled it up herself, without giving Jonas so much as a taste. As for feeding the little ones, I never saw her give them the tiniest crumb. Jonas not only brought the food and fed the babies, but saw that they were snugly tucked into their little bed and warmly covered. It was Jonas

who gave them their first lessons in locomotion and taught them everything else they learned, Matilda, meanwhile, looking on with the indifference of a disinterested spectator.

When cold weather came they all went away, as the place was not a desirable winter residence even for an English sparrow, — for of course you have guessed that Jonas and Matilda were English sparrows. Their home was in a knothole of the eaves of the house next door.

I have often wondered where Matilda learned her advanced ways of bird-living. I can think of only one possible explanation. The walls of the old Chapter House on Carolina Avenue were once covered with ivy, which furnished quarters for hundreds of English sparrows. A year ago last winter a series of lectures was given in the hall of the Chapter House on woman suffrage, and on the rights, privileges, and prerogatives of the New Woman. The following spring the ivy was torn from the walls, and the sparrows had to seek new habitations. Was Matilda one of them, and had she listened to these lectures on the New Woman, and put the theories of the lecturers into practice?

ON THE HEN

NOWHERE in the lower creation does the better sex prevail so triumphantly, and maintain so clearly its segregated and individual self, as in the poultry-yard. Whatever else a hen may be, she is conscious femininity. She has a certain thrift of conduct, and a halo of all the proprieties, equal to that of any honored dame in a country parsonage. The arch debating eye

with which she surveys a pleasant garden-plot after a rain is worthy of a Millamant choosing gems. Her gait and flutter while crossing before the highway wheels will remind you of some Early Victorian lady-love. She belongs to a gynæocracy, and consequently has no grievances. *Taceat mulier* does not keep her out of Parliament; if there be a Sunday meeting, she is there, starched and foremost; if Master Bantam be arrived at that manly period when he can be taught the discreet art of worm-hunting, it is Diana who tutors him.

The imperious gentleman who is pleased to call himself head of these stir-abouts may be as great a buck and braggart as he will; until the silent partner shall lay her first egg, he is indeed a minus quantity. He may offer, if so it please his soul, what the Carolian Duchess of Newcastle calls 'the careless Neglects and Despisements of the masculine sex to the female,' but his scorn cannot carry; a cohort of empresses shall smile him down. A cock seems to have no personal estate save his beauty and his challenge-cry; all that divine Philosophy has given him for stay, among many ills, are the faithful pennons of gold and purple on his tail, and so much vocabulary as his ancestors brought out of the ark: dramatic, but painfully tautologous. No human fop, airing his maiden eloquence, could point a farce and adorn a guffaw as doth this sophomore creature on his trial crow, a sound which must move tears from stones. In fine, the superfluous lord of the hen-house is born to be ridiculous. Like Nero, he means, at least, to be an artist; but his very underlings scoff his flatting tenor, and withdraw, at the mere hint of a solo, to remoter nooks.

Hens, who are somewhat plain of face and figure, must consider what we term good looks as the sign of imbecility, seeing these from one year's end to another on the irresponsible citizens of their commonwealth. To be fair, with them, must mean to be freckled, low of comb, beady of eye, economic of tail, and of a certain Chinese pudginess; everything, in short, that HE is not! On the same showing, a sprawling step must amount to a breach of morals, a loud accent to slander and mendacity; and a spur, once a baronial ensign, should imply nothing short of a profession of atheism.

For manners, our clucking friend takes the bell, with her air of polite semi-cynicism, born of a mood never too eager or gullible, and her strangely fascinating timidity. As in other houses where the husband and father lies heavily on the general conscience, the juvenility takes on an air of maturity and equipoise, unknown in a more even domestic atmosphere. A kitten may be a hoyden, and a young bee go over to Bacchus on his first flower; but the tenderest shechick is a very mistress of etiquette. It talks much, in a silver key, softly, and never to the point; charming are the curvets and sallies with which it wins your eye; it would rather not feed of your delicacies, while lacking your references, but must needs fly to its parent, and first get her opinion concerning your character and the complexion of your set.

A hen's meal-hour is a matter of Napoleonic brevity, and is so distributed as to leave her nigh twelve hours of the day for the study of chemistry and natural history, and for contemplation of the arduous affairs of state. Nothing is nicer than her choice of table dainties, nothing more delicate and epicurean, unless it be

her aim, which is like that of an accomplished archer or salmon-catcher. She is not as we, who pause between the tricklings of soup for conversation, and affect languor at the entrées; or like Thoreau, of all dishes choose the nearest. With fine decisive candor, she sees what she wants, reaches for it, and, never missing her point, 'nicks the flying goodies as they pass,' two hundred neat engorgements to the minute; beautiful as the best jugglery, and, like that, never to be acquired by an alien.

Our own relationship with hens had a romantic opening: nothing less than a love-feast, in that first year of happy expatriation from town, when childhood in rural scenes was as childhood at the pantomime. Before long we became aware of the clumsy aviary, as of actors worth a glance and a nod. One day we discovered that the dressiest mother-hen had married again. She had grown uppish with her seven soprano children, to whom she had been, hitherto, kind and fond. It seems that a compliment from the pedigreed cock had turned her head. They were denizens of the same borough, though they had never been introduced. Domestic cares had engrossed her; and the sapient ladies who had made him all he was, fluttered, a beguiling bodyguard, about their prodigal prince. But he had strategies of his own. With a superb strut of approach, and a too genial wink of his long-baffled eye, he met her one morning alone, under the grapevine, and blurted out, in a tone which would have overturned the nerves of his schoolmistresses, 'You are the most beautiful widow that ever I saw!' She giggled, and pattered off. Nevertheless, her family found her a changed little being from that moment. Inside a week, they sat, with their fourteen orphan

wings pressed close together, on a separate roost; and they saw their country squire of a stepfather, snubbing all his former relatives, lead her in, and help her to crumbs and corn; and they knew that it was the wedding-breakfast.

Be it said that the young strolling audience at this curtain-raiser long looked upon the sun-saluting biped and his harem as upon the most absurd, puppet-like, and grotesque of creatures. But disdain is a ticklish sauce to first acquaintance. In the end the home-keeping fowl forced acknowledgments of their just deserts. We do, verily, take them still for odd gentry; something to be treated handsomely, if need be, and not questioned too closely. We have a true British attitude towards our foreigners, and are agreeably affected to find them alive, pert, and killable. Gravity, proper ambition, and prudence, the hen seems to possess, and admirable powers, not quite of irony, but certainly of sarcasm. But we cannot, for the life of us, get on sympathetic and clubable terms with her. Our animosities, like Tom the terrier, are ready at any moment to run full tilt into her downy shrewish synods. We are on a footing of affable courtesy — yet, one never knows! Those arched lips are but horny nippers, after all; that thin serpentine tongue is a remembrance of lost Eden; that golden hand, too, hath claws. They that can fly or swim are foes with resources. She is the *ewig weibliche:* one prefers to respect her.

Well, we give you joy, poor wayfarers, —

> (Dominique, Langshan and Rock are ye,
> Wyandotte, Cochin, whatever ye be), —

of any weapon in the midst of conspiracy, where life is but a losing fight, and every avenue looms terrible

with the guillotine. Thy most hallowed ideals and uses, in our inhospitable star, are as naught, O Iphigenia, to the Christmas market; thy very lights and livers are open to confiscation; the old largesses of eggs innumerable plead lamely, or not at all, for thee, at the farmer's bar; the selfsame family which once held relations with thee as with a friendly power, promotes thee to be a dinner; the innocentest babe builds auguries on thy dried wish-bone; and the chance spectator (perhaps with the chicken-heart in him which thou hast outgrown) may watch thine indomitable severed mortality violently flying at a fence, or cackling posthumous defiance at this too barbarous world.

HUMAN NATURE IN CHICKENS

I AM convinced that one important way to acquire a profound knowledge of human nature is to study it in chickens. The difference between the mental characteristics of the two sexes, for example: the hen is very peaceable, chanticleer very irascible; the hen is an industrious scratcher, while chanticleer is naturally an idler, and thinks that if he crows and fights, that is enough; the hen takes care of the chicks all day, chanticleer only occasionally giving them a bug, and oftener a dig; the hen takes care of them all night also, chanticleer elbowing them off the perch to get the best place for himself; the hen, having seized another hen about the head, never lets go till the feathers come out, and never stops fighting till nearly dead, while chanticleer fights only for glory, and gives up long before he is hurt much; when they are fed, the hen attends strictly to business and gets all she can, while chanticleer will pick up a morsel, and wave it up

and down with frantic eagerness to be seen of the hen, and values the flattery of having her take it from him more than the food.

These, so far, are well-known observations; but I wish to put on record one that is perhaps new, and, if new, important to the scientific world. It has been commonly supposed by evolutionists that the development of altruism and the benevolent sentiments in the lower animals reaches no further than to the parental and sex points of view. But I have seen one of my roosters call his fellow and feed a bug to him. It may have been a bug that he did not specially want, himself, but this would only be a counterpart of much of our higher human benevolence. Does not most of our charity consist in giving away something for which we have no earthly use ourselves? (By the way, I have known this altruistic rooster to crow with great pride and pleasure when the object of his alms-giving had humbly swallowed the scratchy morsel.) I have seen a mother hen, also, when another brood of little chicks had got mixed up with her own for the moment, making a great pretense of pecking the aliens on the head, to teach them the difference between families in this world, but taking great pains not to hurt the fluffy little strangers. Furthermore, I have noticed that certain other hens, not mothers (but whether any who have never been mothers I have not yet observed), will peck all little chicks with self-restraint, giving them as much salutary discipline as possible without bodily harm.

It may be said that these phenomena occur only among domestic animals, who have caught some morals and manners from their betters by contagion. But I think this is a subtlety, and that we may as well

admit that the development of the moral sentiments begins further back than we have been inclined to put it.

DOGS

I HAVE been denied through life the satisfaction of some of my reasonable wishes for things I should greatly have enjoyed, could I have had them. I count among my smaller solaces for these deprivations the pleasure I have always taken in the companionship of my dogs. The best individuals of this species give proof of so much of what, if we were speaking of persons, we should call 'heart' and 'character' that I find it hard not to believe in a future and higher existence for the dear beasts. I feel sure that their intelligence is capable of more development than most people suppose. I do not care for the two-penny 'tricks' that dogs are so often taught to perform, and have never tried to draw out my dogs' latent talents in this direction; but I have noticed with regard to my own and other persons' dogs that their general intelligence is educated or not according to the manner in which they are treated. Behave habitually toward a dog as though you expected him to conduct himself as a sensible creature, of good-breeding and discretion, and ten to one he will arrive at an understanding of your mind about him, and endeavor to meet your expectations. Treat him, on the other hand, as a mere helpless lady's pet, and he becomes a toy, a canine nonentity. Tease him, or bully him, and he turns a cringing coward. I have a fancy that dogs sometimes come to partake of the dispositions of the people they live with. One instance, at least, occurs to me immediately of a dog

whose traits are noticeably similar to those of his owners. Many persons profess a fondness for dogs whose actions toward them prove to me that they do not really know what it is to care for the animals in the way of a genuine dog-lover. I shall not forget how grateful I found the sympathy of an elderly lady, a friend of our family, who on the occasion of the tragic death of our beautiful shepherd dog wrote us a letter of heartfelt condolence. *She* knew what the loss meant to us.

I heard a true story, not long ago, of a lady, fond of dogs and accustomed to them, who went to visit a friend, the owner of a splendid but most formidable animal — a mastiff, if I remember rightly. The visitor did not happen to meet with the dog till she suddenly came upon him in a doorway she was about to pass through. It chanced somehow that she did not see him, and, stepping hastily, she unfortunately trod upon his foot or his tail. The huge fellow instantly laid hold of her; but before the dog's master, a short distance off, could hasten to the rescue, the lady had looked down, exclaiming quick as thought, 'Oh, I beg your pardon!' whereupon the mastiff as quickly let go his grasp. It is plain that this lady had a proper respect for the feelings of dogs in general, prompting to an habitual kindly treatment of them, and instinct led her to apologize at once for the inadvertent injury, as she would have done to a person.

I confess that it is difficult for me to think really well of those who are averse or even indifferent to dogs; there is something lacking in the moral constitution of such persons, I am convinced. When I think of the way in which my dog lives with me; of the value he sets upon my society, so that liberty to range

abroad with his canine acquaintance counts for nothing in comparison with the pleasure of a short walk with me; of the confidence he has in me, and the impulse to tell me in his fashion all he can of his inner sentiments, troubles, and satisfactions, I find in this something that not only pleases but touches me very much.

Scott, we know, considered the companionship of his dogs indispensable to his comfort; Dr. John Brown has given us life-like descriptions of his own pets, as well as of fine old Rab; and Blackmore, the novelist, shows the right genuine appreciation of these dear dumb friends. There is a dog in Christowell of which he says, 'No lady in the land has eyes more lucid, loving, eloquent; and even if she had, they would be as nothing without the tan spots over them.'

The before-mentioned shepherd dog we once owned had eyes large, soft, and brown, containing such a depth of pathetic expression as made us believers in the doctrine of the preëxistence and transmigration of souls.

THE LURE OF THE BERRY

Men have sung the praises of fishing and hunting, they have extolled the joys of boating and riding, they have dwelt at length upon the pleasures of automobiling. But there is one — sport shall I call it? — which no one seems to have thought worth mentioning — the gentle sport of berrying.

Perhaps calling it a sport is an unfortunate beginning, — it gives us too much to live up to. No, it is not a sport; though I can't think why, since it is quite as active as drop-line fishing. Perhaps the trouble is with the game — the fish are more active

than the berries, and their excesses cover the deficiencies of the stolid figure in the boat.

What, then, shall we call it? Not an occupation, it is too desultory for that; nor an amusement, because of a certain tradition of usefulness that hangs about it. Probably it belongs in that small but select group of things that we do ostensibly because they are useful, but really because they are fun. At any rate, it does not matter how we class it — it is just berrying.

But not strawberrying. Strawberries are so far down, and so few! They cannot be picked with comfort by any one over six years old. Nor blackberrying! Blackberries are good when gathered in, but in the gathering process there is nothing restful or soothing. They always grow in hot places, and the briars make you cross; they pull your hair and tear your clothes and scratch your wrists; and the berries stain your fingers dark blue; and, moreover, they are frequented by those unpleasant little triangular greenish brown creatures known as squash-bugs, which I believe even the Ancient Mariner could not have been called upon to love. No, I do not mean blackberrying.

What then? What indeed but huckleberrying! How can I adequately sing the praises of the gentle, the neat, the comfortable huckleberry! No briars, no squash-bugs, no back-breaking stoop or arm-rending stretch to reach them; just a big, bushy, green clump, full of glossy black or softly blue berries, where you can sit right down on the tussocks amongst them, put your pail underneath a bush, and begin. At first, the handfuls drop in with a high-keyed 'plinking' sound; then, when the 'bottom is covered,' this changes to a soft patter altogether satisfactory; and as you sit

stripping the crisp branches and letting the neat little balls roll through your fingers, your spirit grows calm within you, you feel the breeze, you look up now and then over stretches of hill or pasture or sky, and you settle into a state of complete acquiescence with things as they are.

For there is always a breeze, and always a view, at least where my huckleberries grow. If any one should ask me where to find a good situation for a house, I should answer, with a comprehensive wave of my arm, 'Oh, choose any huckleberry patch.' Only 't were pity to demolish so excellent a thing as a huckleberry patch, merely to erect so doubtful a thing as a house.

I know one such — a royal one, even among huckleberry patches. To get to it you go up an old road, — up, and up, and up, — you pass big fields, new-mown and wide open to the sky, you get broader and broader outlooks over green woodland and blue rolling hills, with a bit of azure river in the midst. You come out on great flats of rock, thinly edged with light turf, and there before you are the 'berry lots,' as the native calls them — rolling, windy uplands, with nothing bigger than cedars and wild-cherry trees to break their sweep. The berry bushes crowd together in thick-set patches, waist high, interspersed with big 'high-bush' shrubs in clumps or alone, and great, dark masses of richly glossy, richly fragrant bay, and low, hoary juniper. The pointed cedars stand about like sentinels, stiff enough save where their sensitive tops lean delicately away from the wind; and in the scant herbage between are goldenrod, — the earliest and the latest alike at home here, — and red lilies, and thistles, and asters; and down close to the ground, if you care to stoop for them, trailing vines of dew-

berries with their fruit, the sweetest of all the blackberries. Truly it is a goodly prospect, and one to fill the heart with satisfaction that the world is as it is.

The pleasure of huckleberrying is partly in the season — the late summer time, from mid-July to September. The poignant joys of early spring are passed, and the exuberance of early summer, while the keen stimulus of autumn has not yet come. Things are at poise. The haying is over; the meadows, shorn of their rich grass, lie tawny-green under the sky, and the world seems bigger than before. It is not a time for dreams or a time for exploits; it is a time for — for — well, for berrying!

But you must choose your days carefully, as you do your fishing and hunting days. The berries 'bite best' with a brisk west wind, though a south one is not to be despised, and a north one, rare at this season, gives a pleasant suggestion of fall while the sun has still all the fervor of summer. Choose a sky that has clouds in it, too, for you will feel their movement even when you do not look up. Then take your pail and set out. Do not be in a hurry, and do not promise to be back at any definite time. And, finally, either go alone or with just the right companion. I do not know any circumstances wherein the choice of a companion needs more care than in berrying. It may make or mar the whole adventure. For you must have a person not too energetic, or a standard of speed will be established that will spoil everything; nor too conscientious — it is maddening to be told that you have not picked the bushes clean enough; nor too diligent, so that one feels guilty if one looks at the view or acknowledges the breeze; nor too restless, so that one is being constantly haled to fresh woods and pastures

new. A slightly garrulous person is not bad, with a desultory, semi-philosophic bent, and a gift for being contented with easy physical occupation. In fact, I find that I am, by exclusion and inclusion, narrowing my description to fit a certain type of small boy. And I believe that here the ideal companion is to be found — if indeed he is not, as I more than suspect he is, the ideal companion for every form of recreation in life. Yes, the boy is the thing. Some of my choicest hours in the berry lots have been spent with a boy as companion, some boy who loves to be in the wind and sun without knowing that he loves it, who philosophizes without knowing that he does so, who picks berries with sufficient diligence sometimes, and with a delightful irresponsibility at other times. Who likes to move on, now and then, but is happy to kick turf around the edges of the clump if you are inclined to stay. Who takes pride in filling his pail, but is not so desperately single-minded that he is unmoved by the seductions of goldenrod in bloom, of juniper and bayberries, of dry goldenrod stalks (for kite sticks), of thistles for puff-balls, of deserted birds' nests, and all the other delights that fall in his way.

For berrying does not consist chiefly in getting berries, any more than fishing consists chiefly in getting fish, or hunting in getting birds. The essence of berrying is the state of mind that accompanies it. It is a semi-contemplative recreation, providing physical quiet with just enough motion to prevent restlessness, being, in this respect, like 'whittling.' I said semi-contemplative, because, while it seems to induce meditation, the beauty of it is that you don't really meditate at all, you only think you are doing so, or are going to. That is what makes it so recuperative in its

effects. It just delicately shaves the line between, on the one hand, stimulating you to thought, and on the other, boring you because it does not stimulate; and thus it brings about in you a perfect state of poise, most restful in itself and in complete harmony with the mid-summer season.

Yes, fishing is good, and hunting is good, and all the sports are good in their turn, — even sitting in a rocking-chair on a boarding-house piazza has, perhaps, its charms and its benefits for some, — but when the sun is hot and the wind is cool, when the hay is in and the yellowing fields lie broad, when the deep woods have gathered their birds and their secrets to their very hearts, when the sky is warmly blue, and the clouds pile soft or float thin and light, then give me a pail and let me wander up, up, to the great open berry lots. I will let the sun shine on me and the wind blow me, and I will love the whole big world, and I will think not a single thought, and at sundown I will come home with a full pail and a contentedly empty mind.

A HUNTER OF THE GRASS-TOPS

At forty minutes past two in the afternoon I am lying in the shade, on 'Lotus Island,' — the island of us lotus-eaters, who come to this part of the meadows in order to forget everything but the pleasures which the fields supply. Not that it is really an island, — more reason yet for the name we give. True, on one side it is bordered by a veritable river; but that other arc of the watery circle which would make this a real island is no more than the ghost of a stream which we can easily imagine flowing in a now deserted chan-

nel. This old bed, higher than the level of the water in the present river, has its sedgy, frog-haunted pools, which were the old stream's eddy-basins; and a row of alders and shrubby trees still impends above the empty bed. Completing the arboreal screen about this retreat, there grows along the present stream's margin, with here an elm and there a maple, the new fringing tangle of willows and alders.

Near my feet, on a spire of grass, is one of those small, dark-colored jumping spiders. He is one fourth of an inch in length. Hop! He is a lively little fellow. Without an effort, and with the directness of a stone from a catapult, he springs nine times his own length, two and a quarter inches, horizontally, to the next spire. Before he goes again I have a good look at his build and marks. His small abdomen is fox-colored, with six or eight dark-brown spots. The head and chest part, which is very large and strong in proportion to the abdomen, is glossy black, beautifully patterned with old gold, while the mouth parts and legs are dappled gray. The legs, designed for leaping, are short and powerful.

He walks a few steps up the grass blade, and, with another of his sudden springs, shoots, or snaps like a snapping seed, to another spire. I now notice a new fact of spider life: for an instant, as a breath of air stirs, a thread of light spans the last-crossed chasm, straight from the spider to his previous resting-place. It is plain that he traces the course of his wanderings by a web, a sort of clue to the grassy labyrinth; though for what purpose I cannot understand.

Now he displays his skill as a tumbler, for in leaping from one grass stem to another he turns a somersault, and alights head downwards. That certainly puts to

shame your ordinary floor-tumbling gymnasts. Then he travels onward for a minute or two, with little rest, making about two inches at a leap. Once he shows another feat of mid-air gymnastics. He sees, six inches lower and nearly beneath him, the horizontally spreading leaf of a little herb, towards which he leaps. But he alights on the under side of the leaf. Apparently this is impossible, yet I happen to perceive how it is accomplished. He aims to clear the leaf's edge by ever so little; then, at the moment of passing, strikes out all the sharp-hooked feet of one side, catches the leaf, thus arresting his fall, and swings himself to the under side. Imagine the attempt of the best human gymnast to perform the same feat, with proportionally one tenth the downward leap which the spider makes, and you realize something of the structural superiority of this little being over mankind.

Several times I observe the gleaming thread carefully attached before each jump. It serves no manifest purpose, such as that of fly-catching or of a bridge. Before leaping, the little fellow prettily raises his hands, or fore legs, evidently in the act of taking aim. He springs for a definite mark, and is remarkably sure of his aim, — a fact which, it may incidentally be pointed out, proves that for distances of several inches the vision of hunting spiders is perfectly distinct and clear.

Alas! At the very instant I brag about him to my friends he misses entirely, and falls — no, he does not fall to the ground, but swings on that little, well-fastened web back to the stalk from which he jumped. I see now the purpose of that fine thread, the clue to the maze, of which he always carries one end. It is a kind of fire-escape, to be used in case he does not

make the target aimed for. And the failure to reach footing this time is rather the fault of the slender yielding grass-stalk whence he sprung.

It is now five minutes before three o'clock. In the last fifteen minutes he has traveled five feet from the place where I first saw him. He has rested briefly here and there, looking about for prey, and twice has made an unsuccessful attempt to strike down a very small individual of the fly kind, which had alighted on a near grass leaf. Each time the winged atom has flown at the instant of the hunter's springing. These flying mites, of a delicate green tint, hundreds of which would weigh scarcely a single grain, have upon their heads tufts of finest hairs, which in the sunlight appear like queerly fashioned halos. The sunbeams easily pass through these little insects, while a breath blows them with resistless force. There are thousands of them flying in and above the grass; and all these thousands, like scholastic angels, could dance upon a pin-point. At rest on the herbage they are nearly invisible to my coarse eyes.

The hunter has now given up the plan of flushing his game. As he sits upon the stub of a very young tree, untimely cut off by last year's scythes, he looks not unlike a lion in waiting for his prey; or, let us say, like Satan casting his baleful eyes about him. Smaller than that hero as he is described in *Paradise Lost*, indeed; but on this island all things flow, and the stream, flowing backward, turns great to small, and small to great.

A beetle, one sixteenth of an inch long, perhaps, comes lumbering up the stalk of a dwarfish herb. As he gains the roof of a leaf, he comes into Satan's ken. The latter turns about, to eye him; but beetles seem

not to his taste, and he resumes his former position. An 'angel,' alighting on a grass blade about eight inches from the spider, attracts my eye; I wonder if hunger has sufficiently sharpened Satan's? Yes, he is off, and making nearly the whole distance in three leaps, is within an inch and a half of the angel; he raises his hands for the leap, and — but the angel, discerning its enemy's motions, perhaps, now takes flight. The spider comes back to the stub. Another minute, and he suddenly springs downward, alighting on the under side of a procumbent grass leaf, and immediately returns, successful; for in his massive jaws, feebly struggling, is an angel. His victim clasped to his breast in malign embrace, he settles to his orgies. For a time the unfortunate's antennæ feebly wave. In six minutes I can see no trace, not even the shell of the body, of the angel. Then for seven minutes afterward the satisfied monster does not stir. The beetle, or a twin brother, upward bound for the summit of the stub, crawls by without disturbing his huge content.

GOSSAMER

LAST autumn I made the discovery that, in addition to the Indian summer, we were favored with a gossamer summer. During this season, which includes all October and the pleasant early days of November, miles on miles of this hazy filament (if it could be measured linearly) are floating about in the soft, indolent air. Especially, late in the afternoon, with a level and glowing sun, do these mysterious threads flash out along the ground, horizontally between shrubs, slantwise from grass to tree, or else cut adrift,

and sailing as the wind wills. Numberless fancies, as subtle and airy-light, are suggested. What now? As the sunbeam plays along this shining length of web, and the gentle breeze gives it motion, but does not break it, might it not be taken for a sudden shaft from the golden bow of the far darter himself; or for a string of the golden lyre, just now touched into toneless melody; a fairy telegraph line, flashing with its electric message; a zigzag of harmless heat lightning? Here a glistening clew has been dipped in the color fount of Iris, — may even be a stray raveling from the fringes of some castaway rainbow. It shows the same prismatic changes that are seen in the wing tissue of the locust or the dragon-fly. Now the lazy wind wafts this way the tangled cordage and tackle of an airship, whose sails, deck, and hull are invisible, — said to be a pleasure yacht carrying a company of sylphs and sylphids, the *beau monde* of the air.

It takes nothing from the poetry that lies in the weft of the gossamer when it is known to be the work of an unconsidered spider, and that it serves some practical purpose (not yet satisfactorily explained) of the producer. By some it is claimed that this floating web is not spread with predacious intent, but rather as a means of aerial navigation; indeed, these vague and indeterminate threads would hardly disturb a gnats' cotillon, if blown in their path. Hitherto we may have regarded the spider as a humble, plodding creature of the earth, an unaspiring, stay-at-home citizen, but this new aeronautic hypothesis hints that the poor insect is a very transcendentalist, an ideal voyager. Its journey may not be as sublime as the flight of the skylark, but it is not a whit less witching and elusive. It seems scarcely credible that this sailing

spider should be able, as some have supposed, to direct the course of its filmy parachute, having neither rudder, ballast, nor canvas. Doubtless, the wind often carries up both web and weaver, the latter in the predicament of a balloonist clinging to the ropes of his runaway car. Some naturalists assert that the gossamer spider instinctively takes advantage of the levity of the atmosphere, thrusting out its threads until they reach a current of warmer and rarer air, which draws them upward, the spider going along with the uncompleted web. Whether it is capable of cutting short its journey and casting anchor at pleasure is indeed questionable.

However, it would seem that there are acrobatic or leaping spiders, that use their webs as buoys in traversing short distances by air; else, how come those fine gluey flosses morning and evening, stretched straight as a surveyor's line between neighboring trees? It is not likely that the spider, after fastening its clew in one tree, descended and reached the other terminus by a tedious détour along the ground. It must have bridged the intervening space by some rapid and dexterous method, to which the exploits of a Sam Patch or a Blondin were absolutely tame and ventureless. If it could be proved that this sagacious insect is really possessed of navigating instinct and habits, why not suppose it extends its journeys, traveling from one latitude to another? Those phantom navies of the gossamer summer sky were perhaps going the same way as the autumn birds of passage. Are Spiders Migratory in Their Habits? may, at some future time, be the subject of serious inquiry and discussion. I was never in luck to find the gossamer weaver at home from its voyages, but more than once have 'spoken' its craft

on the high sea, and received serviceable weather hints. Even in midwinter I have seen occasional shimmering filaments among the dry twigs and grasses, but could never decide whether they were the fresh work of some enterprising spider, tempted out by a brief 'spell o' sunshine,' or merely the remnants of last autumn's spinning, unaccountably spared by the besom of the wind.

It has been suggested that the thick webs which are spread over the fields on a summer morning are there produced for the purpose of collecting the moisture that falls during the night. This theory is sustained by the known fact that the spider is an extremely thirsty creature. Is the spider, then, a disciple of hydropathy as well as an experimenter in aeronautics?

The poets have not, usually, condescended to take much notice of the spider, though mythology (which is a kind of anonymous poetry received from the ancients) relates how a young lady of Lydia impiously invited Pallas to try a spinning race with her; and how, on being vanquished by the immortal spinster of Olympus, the poor foolish girl was about to hang herself with a rope of her own twisting, when lo! she was changed into a spider, in which humble and despised shape she remains to this day. Gavin Douglas, the 'Scottish Chaucer,' in his description of a May morning, does not forget to mention that —

> In corners and clear fenestres of glass,
> Full busily *Arachne* weavand was
> To knit her nettes and her webbes slie,
> Therewith to catch the little midge or flie.

The poetic and nimble-tongued Mercutio tells us that the wagon-spokes of fairy Mab's chariot are

made of long spinners' legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
The traces of the very smallest spider's web, etc.

Nor must we forget the obliging Cavalero Cobweb, one of the elfin gentlemen whom Titania posted to wait on the wants of her long-eared lover: 'Monsieur Cobweb, good Monsieur Cobweb, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good Monsieur Cobweb, bring me the honey bag.'

THE ROCK AND THE POOL

THE grief of it is that I cannot reach the rock by day or by night without disturbing life that is so much finer, if less conscious, than my own. Here, beside the path, the partridge takes her Arab bath; the warm red dust is scattered with down, and rounded to the measure of the little beating breast. Here small fungi rise, jewel-bright, above the mould; touch one, never so softly, and the coral curve blackens and is marred, so delicate is the poise of its perfection. Here is a span of slender grass, flowered with the clinging bodies of moths; they spread pearl-white wings barred with brown, beautiful enough to beat about the hurrying knees of Artemis. But here Artemis never came. Those white feet of hers never shook the early rain from the elder. Only the Indian hunter may have found the rock, stooped above the rain-pool on the summit, and looked upon his own wild face, shadowed against his heritage of stars.

For from the base of the rock all growth falls away. The maple reddening with seeds, the wind-haunted birch, even the thickets of sumach and vine and part-

ridge-berry are a little withdrawn from it. Fire shaped it. Cold smoothed it. And Time himself could give no more to this ancient of days than cupped moss in the clefts, a few fans of lichen delicate as gray foam; and in the hollow of the crest, a pool.

In the pool is gathered all the life of the rock. It is as a window whereby the deep blind Existence prisoned in this iron mass of primeval matter may somehow win hearing and sight; may see his brother stars afloat upon the roads of space, the bees hurrying to the flowering basswood, or hear the last thrush in the cedar; remembering all the bird-voices of time as no more than a momentary song.

There are pools floored with brown and gray leaves, upon which the water lies as warm and still as air. There are pools rimmed with vervain and the wild rock-rose. And there are pools beneath the coronals of goldenrod, where the bumblebee clings, and the snails adventure themselves on summer evenings, and the moths go hawking early. But this pool is always clear—gray water on gray stone. It is as if no leaf fell here, no wing stayed here. This eye of the rock gazes unshadowed and unhindered into the very universe.

What answer there to the immemorial patience of the stone? I lay my face to the face of the rock, drink the stored warmth, and let my soul go adrift in the sun and the silence. Storm was here last night; a branch fell from the old pine whose seeds have blown to the rock and withered there for twice a hundred years. Here is a little feather, black and gold. Here, beside my hand, a dead, rain-beaten bee, done with all flowers. 'O earth, my mother and maker, is all well with you?'

Only the silence, an oriole fluting through it, and

the sunlight. The hurrying bees shine in it like gold. A little pine, springing on the edge of the dense thicket, lifts his tassels to it, golden tinted. The sky fills for a moment with the voices of birds, blown past upon a breath of wind. Soon, the golden lips of the sun, and the gray lips of the wind, will drink the pool from the hollow, and it will be as if the rock slept again, a blind sleep, in which the fall of a year and the fall of a leaf are one. Only within the transient pool is shadowed the infinite — and eternity within this transient heart.

A PROBLEM IN FAVORITISM

How do we come by our likes and dislikes in the minor animal domain? Walking through a hillside meadow in September, I became suddenly conscious that I was sweeping aside grasshoppers in a spirit of irritation, yet at nearly every step casting a look ahead to avoid treading upon a cricket. Why, as between these two saltatory insects, should I be constantly protecting the one and condemning the other? Mentioning the circumstances among a company of friends, I found that every one present shared my peculiar bent, but not one could account for it in himself. The theory of literary association was discarded when inquiry disclosed the fact that only three of us, and those the older members of the party, were familiar with the fable which represents the grasshopper as wasting all the summer in pleasure, while the cricket takes its rightful part in the struggle for existence.

And where did the fable itself come from? Facts were made before fables, and the author of this one was not creating a prejudice, but only reflecting and

embalming one already existing among the people of his day. Have the naturalists ever put on record any evidence that the grasshopper is really an idler and a parasite, or the cricket a self-respecting producer?

We set traps and spread poisons for rats, but we punish Tabby when she catches a squirrel. Why? Because the rat invades our dwellings and robs cellar and pantry, while the squirrel keeps aloof and confines his thieving to the fields and outbuildings? The distinction is not well taken. Both are conscienceless rogues, the essential difference between them being that the rat has the greater courage.

Is it a question of voice? The grasshopper has none, while the cricket appeals to us with her companionable little chirp. The rat is silent and stealthy except when terrified, and then emits a pathetic squeal; but the squirrel, from his safe lookout in a tree-top, chatters and scolds at us like any common shrew. And if there be a charm in the mere possession of a voice, why do we deplore the coming of the seventeen-year locust, which can outshrill the cricket sevenfold, and almost drown the clamor of an excited squirrel? Or why should we cherish the lady-bug while trying to exterminate the spider, neither of which can utter a sound?

What gives us our sense of loathing for the garden toad, demurely useful little neighbor that he has proved himself, while his second cousin the frog, who seems to do nothing but play the dandy and the braggart, is uniformly treated as a good fellow? If the toad gulped and croaked all night long, and made his home in slimy pools instead of in the melon-patch, would they reverse their present order in our esteem?

Does the trouble with one class of wilding creatures

lie in the familiarity which breeds contempt? If it were the grasshopper, instead of the cricket, that warmed her toes at the kitchen hearth; if the squirrel intruded upon the family privacy while the rat affected only the hedgerows and stone-walls; and if the frog grew more affable and moved up into the hop-toad's habitat, should we find our emotions chilling toward the former objects of our partiality because we were treated to an overdose of their society?

We speak of the 'patient' snail, and love to watch him as he toils along, Arab-like, with his house on his back. The caterpillar, also patient and a crawler, arouses only the sentiment of disgust. Yet the snail remains all his life the plodding clod we see him to-day; whereas the instincts of the caterpillar impel him ever toward a finer and more glorious estate, in which he commands readily the admiration we are so reluctant to yield him when he is only in the stage of promise.

We wage war upon the bat, but encourage friendly relations with the woodpecker; yet of the two we are deeper in the bat's books for his beneficences. Is this inequity a matter of color? Does the gayety of the one inspire, and the sombreness of the other depress and repel us? Then to what shall we attribute the good-natured tolerance, and even interest, with which so many of us regard the black ant, and our abhorrence of his red kindred?

All this must point to something; but to what? In its outlook upon the lesser world, is the mind of man occupied by a faculty called reason, which is subject to the operation of definite laws? and if so, how do they explain such phenomena of attraction and repulsion as are typified in the cases I have cited? Or is a

part of the mind simply set apart as a harbor for predilections and antipathies which defy any logical interpretation whatsoever?

FISHES' FACES

Did you ever stop to examine the expression on the face of a fish? I do not mean of some notoriously grotesque fish, but of just any plain seafaring fish. I confess that the fascination for me is the same, whether I stand in front of some great collection of little monstrosities like that in the Naples aquarium, or whether I sit by my dining-room window and contemplate the goldfish in my little boy's glass bowl. People watch the monkeys at the Zoo and remark how human they are, how sly and crafty the old ones, how 'cute' and playful the young ones. But for steady company give me the fish. How restful they are with their mouthings, as regular as if they were governed by a balance-wheel! How quiet, too, for not one word of murmured protest or of chattering fault-finding do they inflict upon us! How philosophical, as they bask in the sun the livelong day or seek the occasional shade of the modest sprig of green which forms the conventional garnishing of their watery abode! How easily gratified are their simple tastes! Surely with their good manners, their quiet deportment, and their stoical bearing, goldfish are the ideal companions of the mature man. Monkeys and dogs and kittens may amuse the children by their tricks and antics, but only the grown man can appreciate the solid qualities of the fish's character as written upon his features.

Not long ago I turned to my old textbooks of natural history to see what the nature students had to say

about the facial expression of the fish. Would you believe it? There were pages about the bone structure of the creature, his scales and his fins, all having to do with his physical fitness for the peculiar kind of navigating through life that he is called upon to perform. But not one word was said about the features of his face, that racial expression of receptivity and of philosophical candor which is a constant sermon and inspiration to the thoughtful observer. I put this down as one more failure of the scientists to explain what poor humanity really wants to know. What do we care about the adaptability of the fish's body to the element for which he was created or to which he has been banished? When it comes to constructing flying-machines, we may well study the structure of the bird's wings. But did any one ever learn to swim by watching a fish? Seriously, can any one look a fish in the face and not admit that there lies the highest expression of the creature's nature? All the rest of the body is the mere machinery for getting about. One wonders why Izaak Walton, that lover of the trout and grayling, did not write one of his inimitable chapters on his little fishes' faces. Or rather one wonders how Piscator could go on catching and cooking harmless creatures who had done no harm to God or man, and whose wondering faces are a constant rebuke to the passion of their cruel captors. Doubtless our fishmongers and cooks take good care to remove the death-head of our morning purchase before it appears on the table, knowing full well that our appetite would perish if forced to confront the cold staring eye and the mouth at last stilled in death.

But to return to the expression of the living fish. There are only a few animals that may be said to have

any facial expression worthy of the name. The rabbit's prominent feature is his flexible nose; the cow and the deer melt you with their great soft eyes; the owl sounds our very being from the bottomless depths of his great orbs; the dog and the horse find expression in the movements of their head and tail. But when I think of these fish, my memory goes back for a parallel to the 'ships of the desert,' those melancholy and patient camels hobbled for the night and chewing their cud in the market-place at Tangiers. There is the same philosophical rumination, the same stoical determination to make the best of it. The mouth expresses it all.

There have been those superficial observers who think that the fish is a fool, that he has no brains. '*Ignorant comme une carpe*,' say the French. Well, I can only say that I have seen many a boy on the benches at school whose expression after a copious dinner would compare unfavorably with that of a fish. I have an idea that one of my little goldfish does not miss much of what is going on. Move where I may, his eye follows me like that of a horse. And as for his mouth, — well, I can't help coming back to the mouth. You simply can't escape it. He seems to be all mouth. Yet, his is not the mouth of indiscriminate greed, or of the vulgar gum-chewer. He chews as if his very life depended upon it (and indeed it does), — as if he were determined not to let one atom that comes his way from the outside world escape him. All the useless chaff, all the buzz-buzz from without, may be said to go in one ear and out the other. But what is worth while he keeps with fine discrimination to build into that graceful body, and to deepen that look of philosophical dignity which I envy but cannot emulate.

You cannot pet a fish; you cannot pull his tail, and tie up his neck with ribbons, and whisper sweet nothings in his ear, as ladies do with poodle-dogs. He is away above that sort of thing. He would not stand for that kind of nonsense, and I respect him for his personal dignity. His nature does not lend itself kindly to slavery, no matter how fair may be the mistress.

Somehow, then, I feel that one of these fishes knows a deal more about the secrets of the universe there in his watery element than we do with all our loud chatter and our airy boastings. When I consider his simplicity, his regularity, his dignity, his receptive expression, — I am sure that he is a philosopher, and my heart, like that of St. Francis, goes out in sympathy to this little brother.

WINTER'S DEPARTURE

It is when we have lost a friend, or are about to lose one, that we dwell on his virtues and graces most fondly. It is in this way that I am mourning the departure of Winter — fine old Winter, frosty but kindly, whom I love far better than Summer, with all her glory. We malign him when we give him only ill names, and call him bitter, harsh, and cruel. For all his storms and rigors, his chill breath and icy grip, not one of the milder-mannered seasons can put on a more gentle and gracious aspect than the frost-king often shows us. The loveliness of the winter landscape might surprise many a city-dweller who should come out into the country in midwinter. In the midst of a month of snow-falls and driving north winds, there sometimes comes a pause of quiet. The winds have swept the dry snow into drifts, each of whose curves

is a line of perfect grace. Over the white lawns and meadows the trees cast faint blue shadows. The world is all white and blue and gray, and the blue of the sky and the gray of the bare branches are of the most exquisite softness imaginable. No sky can equal a winter one for mingled purity and tenderness of tone. And what, in its way, is lovelier than the vista of a country road or village street, bounded by this blue sky distance, and bordered by the columns of leafless trees, which let the same blue light in through the intricate flamboyant tracery of their slender branches? The delicate gray lines turn black at twilight, and define themselves sharply against an amber sunset. To note the gradations of tone in blue skies throughout the year is an endless delight to the lover of color. The coloring of winter hills, though without the richness of autumn, has a beauty of tint beyond anything we see on them in summer. Even in high moonlight they often wear the hue of a pale amethyst, and when a little lightly-scattered snow still clings to them, the faint silvery gleam one catches at a sufficient distance gives to them a dream-like loveliness. The character of nature's beauty at this season seems to become spiritualized. There is in it none of the summer's suggestiveness of luxurious enjoyment, nor of autumn's melancholy appeal; the sentiment of the winter scene is different; the clear outlines, the transparent atmosphere, the sky's serene azure, and the pure radiance flooding all things speak of a peace that is more than resignation and a joy that abides. The art of the landscape painter must fall short in the attempt to catch these broadest effects of Nature, as it must always fail to reproduce her sublimest features. What subtle change is it that comes over nature, by which

we know that spring approaches, although the ground is brown still, and the snow lies in patches? For one thing, we can see that on milder days the sky loses color, except at sunset, when a few opaline tints streak the western clouds. There is a curiously uncertain quality about the light, and a whitish look at the horizon. Nature has an air of waiting, of tremulous expectation, of feeling a little chill of strangeness in winter's deserted realm.

TYPE V

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS, COMMENTS, AND OPINIONS OF THE AUTHOR

THERE is one type of the essay, usually less personal than the preceding types, in which the essayist records his general observations, sets forth his opinions, comments on various aspects of questions of ethical, social, and literary interest, or makes the suggestion that open-mindedness is the most profitable attitude and the surest guarantee of happiness that a man can possess. He may call attention to the other side of commonly accepted truth, belief, or opinion; that is, he may invite the reader to look at old ideas from a new and sometimes opposite angle. Often he attempts to point out the advantage in apparent disadvantage, the beauty that is concealed in ugliness or the commonplace, or the pleasure that is experienced in escaping from the unpleasant. Again, his essay may be a happily phrased, striking definition of an old idea. Or perhaps the essayist may announce a new and pleasing discovery in his study of men and books. He may entertain the reader with bits of curious lore and other out-of-the-way information. The automobile as a rest cure may be the seemingly contradictory subject that he selects for his essay. In another mood, he may propose a radical change, an absurd innovation in present custom; or he may praise eccentricity and whim as he finds them illustrated in his favorite author. The amusing oddities, the humor and the smiles of life, also interest the essayist.

Usually, however, the tone of this type of the familiar essay is slightly more serious than that found in essays of the other four types. The structure, also, is usually slightly more strict than in the other types. In fact, this type of the familiar essay bears the closest relation of any to the formal essay.

THE DOMINANT JOKE

I HAVE always doubted the proposition that 'misery likes company,' and have believed that such a statement was first put forth by some arch-hypocrite whose misery was but a pretense, and who was beckoning some other sham sufferer into a quiet corner where they could both be jovial on the sly.

However slight my knowledge of universal misery may be, I can attest from personal experience that my own misery claims solitude, and slips away all by itself, and turns the key upon the curious world, asking nothing so much as to be 'let alone.' I do not care to weep in company, nor would it cheer me to have a chorus of other weepers to sob in unison with me. Rather would I remain in unmolested wretchedness until my tears had vanished and my eyes and nose assumed normal appearance.

'T is mirth, then, and not misery, which pines for company. Fun cannot thrive alone, and flourishes only among congenial spirits. Our laughter must be shared, our smiles responded to, and every glance of merriment needs recognition to make it worth the while.

Sorrow may bring us nearer to a devoted few, but mirth is after all the test and touchstone of genuine companionship. The great majority of any audience will weep at a pathetic point, but only sympathetic

souls will laugh together at the keen stroke of satire. It is our pet enjoyment, our special definition of fun and entertainment, that best reveals our point of view. One bright responsive glance at the right moment outweighs much thundering applause at a conventional conclusion. Smiles are the flowers of human growth, and laughter 'makes the world go round' more rapidly than love.

It is philosophy, not egotism, which causes us to choose for friends those who can see our jokes. We dread unnecessary translation of our thoughts; that process must go on to some extent even with those nearest to us. Direct transference of thought must be reserved for an angelic state. Indeed, our pleasure in all human intercourse depends largely upon the greater or less amount of translation which must be done. It is not merely foreigners whom we find it difficult to understand; our next-door neighbors may be as much in need of an interpreter as one of alien nationality.

Yet, as a rule, our next-door neighbors will not require the aid of the interpreter to any great extent. There is a national point of view which they possess in common with ourselves. This we can take for granted. There is a certain response which we are sure of calling forth, an understanding upon which we may safely count. We feel the lack of this in our relations with every other nation. Our English cousins, though only 'once removed,' must ever be outside the family circle; the music of their laughter is never quite upon our key, though they may think it better, and so perhaps it is, if he laughs best who laughs last!

We have a distinct national sense of humor which is the product of all the various influences that have made up our national life. It is perhaps the most dis-

tinctive of all our national traits, and one for which we should be duly grateful. It lightens the burdens of the shy New England farmer, lessens the hardships of the Gloucester fisherman, and equalizes the temper of the Western ranchman. The California fruits and flowers grow larger by its aid, and Southern indolence smiles at its touch, despite the memory of fallen grandeur.

This sense is so predominant that one may question the possibility of over-development, and may suggest a hidden danger in a perpetual smile and in a never-ceasing search for the amusing in everything. This carried to excess must mean the sacrifice of serious consideration of life and duty, would do away with reverential thought, and replace fervency with flippancy.

There is a national tendency to overdo the funny side, to make a joke at any cost. Every joke has its price, and some are too expensive. Their payment means a lessening of respect for sacred institutions, a lowering of the standard of morality, a dulling of the sensibility to coarseness and vulgarity. A laugh, like charity, is made to cover a multitude of sins.

A proper sense of humor should be 'an exact medium between too little and too much,' and nice discrimination is needed to set the boundary line. The fact that it is 'but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous' does not oblige one always to take the step.

If France was designated 'a monarchy modified by songs,' we may perhaps be dubbed 'a free republic fettered by jokes.'

Men who fear nothing else, shrink from a joke upon themselves. Soldiers who do not flinch before opposing guns dread to be made ridiculous. This keen dis-

like of being laughed at, which is as old as the history of the world, has reached a very high point of development with us, quite in proportion to the almost exaggerated sense of humor which we have fostered. Woe to the national hero who makes one trifling mistake which may subject him to clever caricature! His meritorious career is henceforth shadowed by one colored illustration. A comic paper will tip the scales of Justice, snatch the victor's prize from his extended palm, and rob the orator of choicest laurels. A brilliant satire will mar the fortunes of the greatest statesman; a laugh will turn the tide of a political convention.

Indeed the joke is fast becoming mightier than the pen. The orator has learned its value, and even the clergyman resorts to it when he desires to stir the flagging interest of his flock. It furnishes sufficient excuse for the impertinence of children, and in its name the daily papers deride the highest national dignitaries.

What is the meaning of its steady growth in power? And what results may we predict from its humorous tyranny?

Is there a chance that our keen relish for fun may finally produce a kind of humorous dyspepsia resulting from overindulgence, unless with epicurean discrimination we demand quality, not quantity, and stubbornly refuse to swallow other than that which should appease a wholesome, nay cultivated, appetite in jokes?

WIT AND HUMOR

Wit and humor are such elemental, fundamental things that it has always been found difficult to analyze them. Upon some points, however, those who have

essayed this puzzling task agree, for they all hold that wit is an intellectual, humor an emotional, quality; that wit is a perception of resemblance, and humor a perception of contrast, of discrepancy, of incongruity. The incongruity is that which arises between the ideal and the fact, between theory and practice, between promise and performance; and perhaps it might be added that it is always, or almost always, a moral incongruity. In the case both of wit and humor there is also a pleasurable surprise, a gentle shock, which accompanies our perception of the hitherto unsuspected resemblance or incongruity. A New England farmer was once describing in the presence of a very humane person the great age and debility of a horse that he formerly owned and used. 'You ought to have killed him!' interrupted the humane person indignantly. 'Well,' drawled the farmer, 'we did — almost.'

A humorous remark or situation is, moreover, always a pleasure. We can go back to it and laugh at it again and again. One does not tire of the *Pickwick Papers*, or of Jacob's stories any more than the child tires of a nursery tale which he knows by heart. Humor is a feeling, and feelings can always be revived. But wit, being an intellectual and not an emotional impression, suffers by repetition. A witticism is really an item of knowledge. Wit, again, is distinctly a gregarious quality; whereas humor may abide in the breast of a hermit. Those who live much by themselves almost always have a dry humor. Wit is a city, humor a country, product. Wit is the accomplishment of persons who are busy with ideas; it is the fruit of intellectual cultivation, and abounds in coffee-houses, in salons, and in literary clubs. But humor is the gift of those who are concerned with per-

sons rather than ideas, and it flourishes chiefly in the middle and lower classes.

Wit and humor both require a certain amount of idleness, time enough for deliberation, — that kind of leisure, in short, which has been well described as a state of receiving impressions without effort. Thus we find wit in the drawing-room, humor in the country store, and neither in the Merchants' Exchange.

Humor is inherent in the nature of things, and even the dumb animals have some sense of it. When your dog welcomes you home, wagging his tail and contracting his lips so as half to disclose his teeth, he is really smiling with pleasure; and if, as more often happens, he does the same thing in a moment of embarrassment, as when he rather suspects that you are about to scold him, then his smile is essentially a humorous smile. There is a joke on him, and he knows it.

Rightly considered, the whole universe is a joke on mankind. 'Humor is the perception of those contrasts and incongruities which are a part of the very texture of human life.' If, as we believe or hope, man is an immortal being, is it not a joke that his earthly existence should chiefly be taken up in maintaining and repairing that frail shell in which the immortal spirit is contained? 'Humor,' as Hamilton Mabie finely said, 'has its source in this fundamental contrast between the human soul, with its far-reaching relations and its immortality, and the conditions of its mortal life. . . . If the mistake which the boy makes in his Latin grammar involves permanent ignorance, there is an element of sadness in it; but if it is to be succeeded ultimately by mastery of the subject, it is humorous, and we smile at it.' And so of man's life viewed as a

fragment of eternity. Humor and faith go hand in hand.

But humor is not only the sudden encounter with some moral incongruity. There is in addition the sense of superiority. The victim, for there must always be a victim, either of his own folly, or of some accident, is placed in a position of inferiority, which constitutes the joke. But is this all? Why do we laugh? The mere misfortune of the man is not enough to make us laugh. We do not laugh when he loses a dollar bill. Nor is the mere unexpectedness of the incongruity sufficient to make us laugh. We seldom laugh at wit, which is equally unexpected. The something further is the sympathetic element. Humor is not simply the sudden perception of a moral incongruity; it is the *sympathetic* perception of it. Thackeray described humor as a mixture of love and wit. He really meant sympathy and wit. Humor, it has been said, is laughing *with* the other man, wit is laughing *at* him. The incongruity that amuses us, that makes us laugh, is the incongruity which exists between the victim's state of mind and his conduct or situation, and that incongruity we cannot appreciate unless, by the exercise of imagination, we are able to put ourselves in the place of the victim. Unless we attain this sympathetic point of view, his conduct may appear to us right or wrong, logical or illogical, wise or foolish, fortunate or unfortunate, — anything except funny. If an ordinary man under ordinary circumstances should step in a hole and tumble down, the incident would not be a humorous one. But if the same accident should occur to a pompous person who was at the very moment engaged in making a theatrical gesture, the incident would be humorous; the incongruity between the victim's state

of mind, sympathetically apprehended by the observer, and his situation, would be felt as laughable.

One who has the sense of humor well developed can even laugh at himself, taking an external but sympathetic view of his own character, conduct, or circumstances. Without this sense, a man is liable to be deficient in self-knowledge. Who is not familiar with that non-humorous, solemn person who commits the most selfish or cruel acts from what he conceives to be the holiest motives? 'A man without a sense of humor,' declares an anonymous writer, 'is occasionally to be respected, often to be feared, and nearly always to be avoided.'

LE NOUVEAU PAUVRE

From olden time it has been the privilege and the pleasure of humanity to deride the newly rich; comedy, satire, and other forms of expression, literary and unliterary, have borne witness to the desire to point out the lack of standard, the ostentation, the selfish gloating over individual possession, of those who have been robbed by swift prosperity of a sense of values. Even in our new country, with its sudden fortunes, we know well how to punish by gibe and jest those whose recent wealth gives them an undue sense of their own importance, resulting in undue display. We make great sport of *le nouveau riche;* who is there to laugh at *le nouveau pauvre* and put him in his place?

Under the impact of new thought in regard to social rights and wrongs, and our large sense of responsibility in the matter of earth's unfortunates, we are developing a new type, very limited in number, and, I fancy, limited in geographic distribution, — I should not

think of offering these reflections to any but a New England Magazine! — of those who flaunt a new type of recent wealth. That old boasting in regard to one's material possessions has given place, in these, to new boasting in regard to what one has not. I can almost imagine a seventeenth-century writer of character-portraits sketching the type as follows: —

'He is of a demure sadness, and goeth poorly clad' — or it might even be she; — 'his countenance weareth ever a look of mild reproof, and ever he watcheth to detect extravagance in his neighbor's apparel; his right hand moveth nervously lest his left know that which it doeth; he walketh as one who would fain keep step with his fellows, yet is ever apart, wrapt in a sad separateness.'

Standards of value alter; there are riches and riches. It is not mere difference in local conviction; time as well as space has something to do with the change; but surely I detect nowadays among the chosen few, new causes for self-congratulation, a new vainglriousness. I cannot be mistaken in remembering in the atmosphere about my far-off childhood, pride in worldly goods, in glossy horses, in ruffled gowns of silk and lace; unquestionably I remember a reverential tone in speaking of the rich, deepening to awe in speaking of the very rich. Now, how different! We look with pity upon the multi-millionaire; a suggestion that he is no better than he should be is in our very way of saying his name. A shrug of the shoulders, a lifting of the eye-brows at the mere mention of great riches, betrays our inner standards. Doubt as to whether even honesty, let alone other virtues, could be his has been instilled into our minds by all that we have read concerning him and his kind. We act, some-

what prematurely, as if we were already within that kingdom of heaven whose entrance is so needle-hard for the rich. In all this we are a trifle overassured, for the fact that we lack the plutocrat's wealth is no proof that we have those other, more precious spiritual possessions whose absence we scorn in him.

But human nature is human nature always, in rich folk and in poor; the sources of inner vanity are perhaps over-quick to reflect the possibility of changed standards. Many of us are growing a bit ostentatious in our poverty. Do we not point with pride at the clothes we do not have, the pleasures we forego, the luxuries in which we would not for any consideration indulge? We wear again the old street suit, and loftily remark to our friends that we cannot afford to be tailored anew every winter. We sit upon platforms at meetings wherein the problems of the poor are discussed, tricked out in ancient garments, worn a trifle histrionically. There is a touch of moral snobbery in our attitude as we tell how little we spend on ourselves, how frugally we lunch, in what Spartan fashion we dine, with an ensuing silence suggestive of the long list of good causes that we are helping on. Vulgarly rich in convictions, airily intolerant of those who have not as great possessions as we, we flaunt our wealth, with a certain lack of good taste, in the faces of those less opinionated than ourselves. We are a bit self-conscious in displaying the evidences of this shameless monopoly of virtue, and wear a gentle air of patronage toward our less fortunate fellows. Can it be, — surely it cannot be that the old warning could apply here, and that this air of superiority may prove more of an obstacle than the camel's hump at Heaven's gate!

That look of reproof on the part of some of the leaders of modern social endeavor toward those who do not hold their convictions, is full of danger. Humble-minded self-indulgence is perhaps better than this; here, at least, one is one with one's fellows. The situation is full of irony; endeavoring to share more generously our worldly possessions with the poor, perhaps even considering the possibility of common ownership, we hoard in more than the old individualistic manner these new virtues which our fellows have not yet acquired. Human progress is notoriously full of contradictions; here is one that gives pause for thought. In moving toward that era of more fully realized human brotherhood, we are perhaps losing as much as we gain: that old sense of kinship with man as man, breaking under the strain and stress of newly-discovered conviction which many fail to understand or to adopt. Proud spiritual walls are just as prone to keep one's neighbor out as are high-piled walls of brick and stone, even with glass on top. How a sense of moral superiority locks its possessor in, cuts him off from his kind! At the stern mention of a new creed one can often hear a sound as of a key turning in a lock, and one knows that here is another soul condemned to solitary imprisonment in its own virtue, until some friendly imp of failure or transgression sets it free.

Humble, as it behooves the poor to be, in the presence of those rich in theory, many merely watch and wait. Each theorist is sure that his wealth is the only real wealth; each, that his panacea will cure all social ills. But, aware of the complexity of human ailments, the many-sidedness of human wrongs, what is one to do? Keeping step with one agitator, we lose step with another, — perhaps lose step with simple humankind

in keeping step with either. Alack, and well-a-day! Meanwhile, one yearningly recalls that instinctive human sympathy, antedating social convictions, based on the ordinary experiences of the threshold and the hearth. This also has its fine uses; it may be the most precious thing there is: this sense, below difference of faith, of oneness with one's kind, of common destiny in this common predicament. In this dim path whereon we struggle, groping our way, it is well to keep in touch with our fellows, no matter what the differences between us in worldly or in moral rank or station.

As for these new riches of professed poverty, we stop to ponder. They may not all be real; shall we gloat before we are sure? Many a fortune of dollars or of nuggets or of ideas proves to have sandy foundations and melts away. Perhaps here, as elsewhere, those who have had their wealth long enough to forget it are no longer self-conscious enough to gloat. Those whose interest in their neighbors is too recent to be human instinct, whose discovery of a common humanity is too fresh to seem part of them, who cannot care for their fellows and forget that they are caring, who cannot feel kindliness without flaunting it, who cannot sit in the presence of their kind without implying that their kind has no such wealth of love for humanity, are assuredly lacking in spiritual good breeding. My lady, newly rich, proudly conscious of her priceless furs and jewels, is perhaps less vain than my lady newly poor, proudly conscious of her priceless convictions and habits that make her not as others are. Tradition has delivered to our laughter, for just chastisement, the newly rich; shall not the newly poor, for similar reasons, be delivered to the laughter of the world?

BEHIND THE EYE

NOTHING is seen until it is separated from its surroundings. A man looks at the landscape, but the tree standing in the middle of the landscape he does not see until, for the instant at least, he singles it out as the object of vision. Two men walk the same road; as far as the bystander can perceive, they have before them the same sights; but let them be questioned at the end of the journey, and it will appear that one man saw one set of objects, and his companion another; and the more diverse the intellectual training and habits of the two travelers, the greater will be the discrepancy between the two reports.

And what is true of any two men is equally true of any one man at two different times. To-day he is in a dreamy, reflective mood, — he has been reading Wordsworth, perhaps, — and when he takes his afternoon saunter he looks at the bushy hillside, or at the wayside cottage, or down into the loitering brook, and he sees in them all such pictures as they never showed him before. Or he is in a matter-of-fact mood, a kind of stock-market frame of mind; and he looks at everything through economical spectacles, — as if he had been set to appraise the acres of meadow or woodland through which he passes. At another time he may have been reading some book or magazine article written by Mr. John Burroughs; and although he knows nothing of birds, and can scarcely tell a crow from a robin (perhaps for this very reason), he is certain to have tantalizing glimpses of some very strange and wonderful feathered specimens. They must be rarities, at least, if not absolute novelties; and likely enough,

on getting home, he sits down and writes to Mr. Burroughs a letter full of gratitude and inquiry, — the gratitude very pleasant to receive, we may presume, and the inquiries quite impossible to answer.

Some men (not many, it is to be hoped) are specialists, and nothing else. They are absorbed in farming, or in shoemaking, or in chemistry, or in Latin grammar, and have no thought for anything beyond or beside. Others of us, while there may be two or three subjects toward which we feel some special drawing, have nevertheless a general interest in whatever concerns humanity. We are different men on different days. There is a certain part of the year, say from April to July, when I am an ornithologist; for the time being, whenever I go out-of-doors, I have an eye for birds, and, comparatively speaking, for nothing else. Then comes a season during which my walks all take on a botanical complexion. I have had my turn at butterflies, also; for one or two summers I may be said to have seen little else but these winged blossoms of the air. I know, too, what it means to visit the seashore, and scarcely to notice the breaking waves because of the shells scattered along the beach. In short, if I see one thing, I am of necessity blind, or half-blind, to all beside. There are several men in me, and not more than one or two of them are ever at the window at once. Formerly, my enjoyment of nature was altogether reflective, imaginative; in a passive, unproductive sense, poetical. I delighted in the woods and fields, the seashore and the lonely road, not for the birds or flowers to be found there, but for the 'serene and blessed mood' into which I was put by such friendship. Later in life, it transpired, as much to my surprise as to anybody's else, that I had a bent toward

natural history, as well as toward nature: an inclination to study, as well as to dream over, the beautiful world about me. I must know the birds apart, and the trees, and the flowers. A bit of country was no longer a mere landscape, a picture, but a museum as well. For a time the poet seemed to be dead within me; and happy as I found myself in my new pursuits, I had fits of bewailing my former condition. Science and fancy, it appeared, would not travel hand in hand; if a man must be a botanist, let him bid good-bye to the Muse. Then I fled again to Emerson and Wordsworth, trying to read the naturalist asleep and reawaken the poet. Happy thought! The two men, the student and the lover, were still there, and there they remain to this day. Sometimes one is at the window, sometimes the other.

So it is, undoubtedly, with other people. My fellow-travelers, who hear me discoursing enthusiastically of vireos and warblers, thrushes and wrens, whilst they see never a bird, unless it be now and then an English sparrow or a robin, talk sometimes as if the difference between us were one of eyesight. They might as well lay it to the window-glass of our respective houses. It is not the eye that sees, but the man behind the eye.

As to the comparative advantages and disadvantages of such a division of interests as I have been describing, there may be room for two opinions. If distinction be all that the student hungers for, perhaps he cannot limit himself too strictly; but for myself, I think I should soon tire of my own society if I were only one man, — a botanist or a chemist, an artist, or even a poet. I should soon tire of myself, I say; but I might have said, with equal truth, that I should soon tire of nature; for if I were only one man, I should

see only one aspect of the natural world. This may explain why it is that some persons must be forever moving from place to place. If they travel the same road twice or thrice, or even to the hundredth time, they see only one set of objects. The same man is always at the window. No wonder they are restless and famished. For my own part, though I should delight to see new lands and new people, new birds and new plants, I am nevertheless pretty well contented where I am. If I take the same walks, I do not see the same things. The botanist spells the dreamer; and now and then the lover of beauty keeps the ornithologist in the background till he is thankful to come once more to the window, though it be only to look at a bluebird or a song sparrow.

How much influence has the will in determining which of these several tenants of a man's body shall have his turn at sight-seeing? It would be hard to answer definitely. As much, it may be, as a teacher has over his pupils, or a father over his children; something depends upon the strength of the governing will, and something upon the tractability of the pupil. In general, I assume to command. As I start on my ramble I give out word, as it were, which of the men shall have the front seat. But there are days when some one of them proves too much both for me and for his fellows. It is not the botanist's turn, perhaps; but he takes his seat at the window, notwithstanding, and the ornithologist and the dreamer must be content to peep at the landscape over his shoulders.

On such occasions, it may as well be confessed, I make but a feeble remonstrance, and for the sufficient reason that I feel small confidence in my own wisdom. If the flower-lover or the poet must have the hour,

then in all likelihood he ought to have it. So much I concede to the nature of things. A strong tendency is a strong argument, and of itself goes far to justify itself. I borrow no trouble on the score of such compulsions. On the contrary, my lamentations begin when nobody sues for the place of vision. Such days I have — blank days, days to be dropped from the calendar — when 'those that look out of the windows be darkened.' The fault is not with the world, nor with the eye. The old preacher had the right of it; it is not the windows that are darkened, but 'those that look out of the windows.'

THE MONOTONY OF OUR MINDS

It is not that the outside world is so wearisome; the trouble is with the monotony of our own minds. They are only music-boxes, after all, that play the same tunes, over and over. They are, in fact, like some queer species of music-box that should suppose itself to be infinite in variety, and be always expecting to play a wonderful new tune the next minute. It is really vexatious to find, if we set a watch on ourselves, that from the moment of waking, each morning, we take up the same old programme of interests, ideas of people and things, mind-pictures, and what not; and the inner life of every hour, as we go along through the forenoon and afternoon, copies the corresponding hour of the previous day with painful exactness. At least, I myself confess to that; 'tis so in Denmark.' To a certain extent, no doubt, this mental repetition is due to the repetition of outside impressions. When we open our eyes on waking, for instance, there is the same eastern light through the same half-closed win-

dow, the familiar pillow and bed drapery, the pictured Madonna that has always hung on the opposite wall, and the friendly favorite books upon the little table. So the mind, as it begins to glimmer out of the mists of sleepiness, naturally moulds itself, as usual, upon this wonted *ensemble* of surroundings. The face, or the faces, never failing to appear at this hour to the mind's eye, punctually, reappear; the past scene — mournful, or delightful, or bitter-sweet — that habitually comes back, renews itself as ever; the mind's day begins, with the same mingling of the old regret, the old plan, the old discouragement, the old rousing of the will; the music-box commences to play its tune. So, when one gets to be aware of this, he may look forward to each accustomed place and act of the day, and see a certain set of ideas waiting for him. He sits down in the prescribed chair as the clock strikes, and finds he has seated himself also among a throng of mental activities, the same as the day before, the *genies* of the place. He takes a certain invariable attitude, and dips a pen in the usual inkstand, and finds he has at the same moment taken a wonted mental attitude toward things in general, and has dipped his pen into a flood of habitual ideas. I am not sure that, when a man so much as puts up an umbrella, he does not put up with it a hovering cloud of notions that have their regular habitation in its folds. We all remember the pathetic declaration of the old man, that he was 'so tired of putting on his shoes in the morning, and taking them off again at night.' It was not the shoes of which he was so tired!

It is on this account that it is almost always good advice to a person suffering from disaster, or overwhelming sorrow, to 'go away somewhere.' The new

surroundings give the mind a chance, at least, to get free from its besetting thoughts and moods; and it is strange and pitiful, sometimes, to see how, on returning and opening the door, the old trouble steps out and takes one by the hand and leads him in.

Are we not all driven to wonder, first or last, that our friends do not get more weary of us, when we get so weary of ourselves? But then, fortunately, they do not often have us by the twenty-four hours together, as we do ourselves. As to those who are not particularly our friends, it is not strange that they do not find us any more interesting. We cannot blame them. It is a natural and healthy desire, this craving for something a little fresh and new. We may sometimes feel a kind of apologetic sense of our monotonous aspect in their eyes. We may say, under our breath, as we meet their accustomed faces on our beaten tracks along the pavement, 'Here I am again, the same old six-pence! I wish, for your sakes, I were something different, but here I am again!' And one may even feel moved, of an autumn afternoon, to put his feeling about it into some such verse as we shall venture to append to this fragmentary meditation:—

MY REFUGE

Down to the flowing river I betake me,
With my dark mood, in these my clouded days.
I cannot meet the face of men; they make me
Blush for my dolorous look and moping ways.

They have no melancholy thoughts, because
They have no thoughts: they eat, and drink, and sleep;
No darkling mystery of being draws
Their eyes, that never shine and never weep.

They count my silence as a kind of sin,
Resent my difference as 't were a crime;

They almost make me wish myself their kin,
And I am strange and old before my time.

So to the flowing river I betake me,
Down where it flashes through the dusk of firs;
A lonely little hermitage I make me,
Where nothing but the wren or squirrel stirs.

Here I am not ashamed to bring each day
The same old thoughts, the same old mournful dream;
The waves that heard this morning did not stay,
And yesternight's already seaward stream.

THE OTHER SIDE

CLIMBING the hill of the years, about the twentieth turn one begins to catch glimpses of the Other Side. Youth sees only this side, its side, the absolute side. Then winds a little level path along the cliffs from which Youth gets strange mist-magnified, haze-distorted views across the valley. 'Do you know,' it whispers solemnly, 'I fear I am a sad heretic!' Or, 'When I was a child I fancied this a happy world!' Or, 'I do not like to talk about myself; nobody understands me!'

And Middle Age laughs at the little egotist. It has walked that cliff path; it knows. Now Middle Age is roaming at will, crossing new-made bridges, trying shaky stepping-stones, pushing gayly off in skiff or air-ship, and taking unmitigated, unabashed delight in these excursions to the other side. The old syllogism has come true: this side is not that side, hence this side must be the other side.

Sallie and I were discussing an acquaintance, and I gave my opinion in emphatic terms not wholly complimentary. Sallie's 'nevertheless' inaugurated a rose-

colored list of our acquaintance's virtues, each item strengthening by opposition my casual views. Next day I overheard Sallie using my argument to a caller and getting well drubbed for it; while I, trying Sallie's views on a fourth person, listened to my original opinion on our much-discussed friend. Now could anything have been more diverting? None of us cared; nobody was hurt. Our minds took contrary flexures as automatically as we 'sit light' when driving over a bump in the road, or lean in when the train curves out, or hurry our steps round the far side of Pisa's tower.

Having an invalid in the family and being asked day after day how he was, I adopted one rule of reply. When the query was couched with smiles and cheerful tones, I replied that my patient was not so well. When the interrogation came dolefully, my patient was rather better. He himself was at first shocked at such levity; but, testing it, found it so provocative of amusement that I was condoned if not applauded.

A newspaper report of the serious illness of Judge Hoar caused a group of his friends to make inquiries of his brother. 'Oh, yes,' said the Senator genially, 'my brother was ill. His family were away and I was away and there was nobody to differ from him. He was lonely as one katydid without another to cry katydid n't. I returned to town, hurried to see him, contradicted everything he said, and we had several heated arguments. Now he is better, much better; he will soon be himself again.' And he was.

'I acted like a devil,' Sallie exclaimed one day; and when I protested, — 'Yes I did; and I wanted to act like a devil, and don't you with any perverted spirit of patience belittle my success in it.' Parents should let their children be contrary at times; it eases

the strain. One wise father, when his boys threatened to run away from home, always fell in with the project, adding a courteous invitation to come home to spend the first night. On the contrary, being contrary to others' contrariness is merely to repeat on a superlative scale the original bone of contention. We 'catch the sense at two removes.'

While we get frequent profit and amusement in differing from others, the situation is more piquant when we differ from ourselves. In the midst of writing an editorial on the 'Interrogative Bore' I recall how hurt I was when one of my friends ceased to inquire about my affairs. 'Never explain,' I used to urge, till there stole over my memory the grace and balm of certain explanations made by loyal, velvet souls.

Descanting upon the sins of procrastination, I am haunted by a sense of the hours I have wasted by 'raw haste, half-sister to delay'; the crossed letters my celerity has precipitated; the apples I have discarded because I plucked them green. So I write one side of the case blithely, and then refute it tellingly, as tellingly as did my absent-minded friend who responded to his own toast. Sometimes an editor accepts both my sallies; sometimes he takes but one, — not necessarily the better one, but because he already has on hand a pat rejoinder written by another. Or sometimes it happens I had written the rejoinder myself. Those years I had gone on unconsciously collecting data on the other side, till the flood broke through like a reservoir in the hills, washing away all I had built up of old. Well, why not? We change our skins every seven years, why not our minds? To feel the same thing continuously is to feel nothing at all. We

read a book we marked ten years ago and contradict each underscored assertion.

James says that the obstinate insistence that tweedledum is not tweedledee is the bone and marrow of life. A judge of one of our highest courts recently returned to private practice because he hated having to be impartial. He needed the enthusiasm of acting one-sidedly. For him progress lay not in a straight line equidistant from either bank but, as in tacking, in the over-accentuating of one principle at a time. One mother is a notable cook. Her daughter prefers that her children shall remember her by something else than the good things she puts into their mouths. The third generation elects domestic science. Romanticism was a protest against the barren formalism of a decadent classicism. When romanticism ran to seed, realism sprang up to choke it. Then the new symbolism ploughed up the dry facts of the last crop. Luxury needs the corrective of hard times, and from the resultant stern economy blooms the wherewithal to provide beauty and art and song.

By such corrective spice our knowledge gets digested into wisdom. The reverse side of the judge mentally exhausted through the strain of being impartial is the backslider from Christian Science who was tired of being so happy all the time. No single virtue is the key to the universe. The French, shouting '*Egalité*,' were blind to the fact that the greatest inequality is achieved by the equal treatment of unequals. In winter I and numberless other students and tax-payers are practically debarred from the use of a splendid reading-room in a great public library because the atmosphere reeks with the odor of the soiled clothes of hundreds of loafers who occupy the

chairs and doze over magazines which they cannot read but which they usurp and pollute. All the yarn Penelope spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths.

Many-sidedness, however, has its perils, too. It is possible to cultivate intellectual conditions that fairly paralyze the will. Premature multiplication of many points of view, cultivated emphasis of the many-sidedness of truth, readiness to defend any proposition, tends, as President King says, to over-sophistication. Lord Rosebery's fatal gift of seeing both sides of a question produces an equilibrium of inactivity of enormous loss to British politics. As Sentimental Tommy sagely remarked, 'It is easy enough to make up your mind if you have only one mind'; but he had so many.

Still, are not our many minds, is not our many-sidedness, the inevitable fruit of single-mindedness? They are woven together like the wrong side and the right side of a fabric, and in the best fabrics the wrong side is the right side, too. Let us decline to be frightened by this bugbear of the other side. Turn it over. Cross over. Know the other fellow. Try the other point of view. The judge asked Sam Weller if he spelled his name with a V or a W. 'That depends upon the taste and fancy of the speller, my lord,' replied Sam.

INTEREST IN THE UNINTERESTING

If one were looking for a clue which should lead into the innermost secret of modern educational reform, one might find it in the word 'interesting.' The fundamental proposition of the present is that one can

do well only that in which one is really interested. So far, so good. It would be hard to find any opponents to this thesis; for no one who has accomplished anything in this world can fail to recognize the vast difference between his results when he has been doing routine duty, and when he has, if only for a moment, been carried forward by an absorbing interest. The turning-point in the life of many a youth has come when he has first actually felt the passion of work upon him. I recall the case of a lad who, during three quarters of his college life, was the despair of all who knew him — idle, indifferent, silly, apparently without even character enough to be bad. Four years from that time he was graduating from the medical school at the head of his class, and with an unblemished record throughout his course for diligence, enthusiasm, and sound sense. I asked him what it was that had waked him up; and he said it was simply that, in the summer vacation after that third college year, he had taken hold of a job of work which he was compelled to do to save his degree, and, for the first time in his life, had carried it through to the end. In carrying it through he had found his interest aroused, and from that time on it had never flagged. He could hardly speak of the beautiful operation for appendicitis without emotion.

There can be no doubt about it: one does thoroughly well, in the highest sense of the word, only that in which one is interested. But our friends the educators have added a corollary to this proposition. They have said, or implied, that, this being the case, one should undertake to do only, or at least chiefly, that in which one is already interested. Is this safe ground? If one confines it to the choice of a profes-

sion for life, the argument appears sound enough. One ought to choose as a life work that in which one expects to find the deepest and most permanent interest, even if it be only the interest in getting money. Only so can one hope for true success. Yet even here one assumes that he who is beginning life has already a well-defined interest in something; and in how many cases this is not the fact, we all know, if we know anything of youth. As we go down in the scale of experience the argument gets less and less trustworthy. It answers pretty well in the higher stages of college study, and the good results are hardly questioned by any who have watched the experiments now going on in the use of the elective principle in colleges. By means of this principle it has been possible for young men to turn their activities into those lines of study which especially appeal to them, in this way to get better results, and so to gain something, be it ever so little, of that exaltation of spirit which comes from actual achievement. Still, one who is familiar with the student mind cannot overlook the fact that choice of one field of work means the neglect or avoidance of another; and he who knows the ways of youth knows that the principle of the least resistance is far too tempting to be trusted without caution. The method of choice works well in the higher grades of college work, but its dangers are manifest.

As we come into the lower stages of education, we reach a zone, not precisely definable, in which the dangers become more prominent and the advantages more questionable. To almost any youth under, say, eighteen, nothing in the way of study is either violently uninteresting or notably enticing. Doubtless one thing 'comes easier' to him than another, and if left to him-

self he is very, very likely to mistake this ease of acquisition as an indication of permanent interest. Of course, in all this talk genius is barred. Genius, as it will submit to no rules, so also needs no rules. The question is: For the vast multitude of youth, is it safer to say, 'Attempt nothing in which you are not interested, lest your accomplishment therein be poor,' or to say, 'Don't worry about whether a subject be interesting or not, but believe that, on the whole, the traditions of the past will guide you more safely than you can guide yourself just yet, and do what comes to you as if it were the only thing possible for you to do at the time'? Good accomplishment is indeed one of the great stimuli to the intellectual life, but it is only one. The sense of having done faithfully, and a little better than we have done it before, some kind of work that was not 'interesting' is also a stimulus, and a powerful one. I hardly know of a more precious gift to any man than the power of seeing the interest which lies concealed in the 'uninteresting.' Everything is interesting if you can get into it far enough, and he who can fit the sweeping of his room into its right place in the law of God finds that it is no longer the sweeping of a room, but the adjusting of one tiny yet essential spring into the mechanism of the universe.

The vast burden of every human life is routine, and one's own routine is seldom 'interesting.' The real problem of every education is how best to prepare a man to carry his lifelong burden joyfully. Surely it is not by deceiving him into the hope that it will be entertaining, nor by teaching him to avoid it as far as he can. Is it not rather by trying, in so far as in us lies, to make him see the interest which the

uninteresting may have for him? We Americans are perhaps in greater danger than others in this matter, because the whole tendency of our life is towards the avoidance or the removal of unpleasant things. It is a curious fact that the Continental languages do not offer precise equivalents for our word 'comfort.' We all understand, however, what that word means: it is the avoidance of discomforts, the making our way as straight and as soft as possible, the padding of rough spots, the cultivation of fastidious refinements, in which the American leads all the world. The danger in our education is that we shall go so far in directing our children's minds to the interesting that they will cultivate the same dread of that which does not interest them at once which we are all cultivating as to the stuffing of our chairs, the elegance of our traveling arrangements, the fastidiousness of our toilet, and so on.

By the side of the principle that one does best that in which one is interested let us place two others in equally large letters. First, that within the dullest routine there lies hidden some element of interest, if we will only do the thing nearest as if there could not be any other work possible to us. There does not seem to be much poetry in the digging of a garden bed. To the clown there is none, but the man of thought and refinement will find in the sweet odor of the upturned earth, in the skill needed to bring the under layer to the surface, to open all to the action of the sun and air, to finish off the top true and even, ready for the seeding, and in the thought that this is not mere earth, but potential life and beauty in form and color and perfume, — in all these he will find an interest which will lift his work at once upward into the region of

true creative activity. The second principle is that, even when work is wholly without interest, there is a discipline in the conquest of a disagreeable task which is of itself an indispensable part of the training of a man. 'Waterloo was won on the football field of Eton,' and the lesson of discipline which the youth knows so well how to apply in his sports must be learned also in preparation for the Waterloos of the intellect.

THE GRACE OF OBSCURITY

CLEARNESS, directness, ease, precision, — these are literary virtues of a homely and primary sort. Reserve, urbanity, depth, force, suggestiveness, — these, too, are virtues, and happy the writer who has them. He is master of his art.

No good workman likes to be praised overmuch for the elementary qualities. Let some things be taken for granted, or touched upon lightly. Tell a schoolboy that he writes grammatically, — if you can, — but not the editor of a newspaper. Almost as well confide to your banker that you think him something better than a thief. 'Simplicity be cursed!' a sensitive writer used to exclaim, as book after book elicited the same good-natured verdict. 'They mean that I am simple, easily seen through. Henceforth I will be muddy, seeing it is beyond me to be deep.' But nature is inexorable, and with the next book it was the same story. Probably there was not a line of his work over which any two readers ever disputed as to its meaning. In vain shall such a man dream of immortality. Great books, books to which readers return, books that win vogue and maintain it, books for the study of which societies are organized and about which libraries ac-

cumulate, must be of a less flimsy texture, — in his own testy phrase, less 'easily seen through.'

Consider the great classics of all races, the Bibles of the world. Not one but abounds in dark sayings. What another book the Hebrew Scriptures would be if the same text could never be interpreted in more than one way, if some could ever be interpreted at all! How much less matter for preaching! How much less motive for exegetical research! And withal, how much less appeal to the deepest of human instincts, the passion for the vague, the far away, and the mysterious! All religious teachers, in so far as they are competent and sincere, address themselves to this instinct. The worthier they are of their calling, the better do they appreciate the value of paradox and parable. The greatest of them made open profession of his purpose to speak over the heads of his hearers; and his followers are still true to his example in that particular, however they may have improved upon it in other respects. They no longer encourage evil by turning the other cheek to the smiter; not many of them foster indolence by selling all that they have and giving to the poor; but without exception they speak things hard to be understood. Therein, in part at least, lies their power; for mankind craves a religion, a revelation of the unseen and the unprovable, and is not to be put off with simple morality, with such commonplace and worldly things as honesty, industry, purity, and brotherly love. No church ever waxed great by the inculcation of these every-day virtues.

In literature, the value of half-lights is recognized, consciously or not, by all who dabble in foreign tongues. Indeed, so far, at least, as amateurs are con-

cerned, it is one of the chief encouragements to linguistic studies, the heightened pleasure of reading in a language but half understood. The imagination is put freshly in play, and timeworn thoughts and too familiar sentiments are again almost as good as new. Doudan, writing to a friend in trouble, drops suddenly into English, with a sentence or two about the universality of misfortune. 'Commonplaces regain their truth in a strange language,' he explains; 'if we complain of ordinary evils, we ought to do it in Latin.' The hint is worth taking. So long as we have something novel and important to communicate, we may choose the simplest words. 'Clearness is the ornament of profound thoughts,' says Vauvenargues; but we need not go quite so far as the same philosopher when he bids us reject all thoughts that are 'too feeble to bear a simple expression.' That would be to reduce the literary product unduly. Joubert is a more comforting adviser. 'Banish from words all uncertainty of meaning,' he says, 'and you have made an end of poetry and eloquence.' 'It is a great art,' he adds, 'the art of being agreeably ambiguous.'

Such tributes to the vague are the more significant as coming from Frenchmen, who, of all people, worship lucidity. Let us add, then, the testimony of one of the younger French writers, a man of our own day. 'Humanity hardly attaches itself with passion to any works of poetry and art,' says Anatole France, 'unless some parts of them are obscure and susceptible of diverse interpretations.' And in another place in the same volume (*Le Jardin d'Épicure*) we come upon this fine saying: 'What life has of the best is the idea it gives us of an unknown something which is not in it.' How true that is of literature, also! The

best thing that we derive from a book is something that the author never quite succeeded in putting into it. What good reader (and without good reading there is no good writing) has not found a glimpse, a momentary brightness as of something infinitely far off, more exciting and memorable than whole pages of crystalline description?

Vagueness like this is the noblest gift of a writer. Artifice cannot compass it. If a man would have it, let him pray for a soul, and refresh himself continually with dreams and high imaginings. Then if, in addition, he have genius, knowledge, and literary tact, there may be hope for him. But even then the page must find the reader.

Of vagueness of a lower order there is always plenty; some of it a matter of individual temperament, some of it a matter of art, and some a matter of a want of art. It is not to be despised, perhaps, since it has utility and a marketable value. It results in the formation of clubs, and so is promotive of social intercourse. It makes it worth men's while to read the same book twice, or even thrice, and so is of use in relieving the tedium of the world. It renders unspeakable service to worthy people who would fain have a fine taste in literature, but for whom, as yet, it is more absorbing to guess riddles than to read poems; and it is almost as good as a corruption of the text to the favored few who have an eye for invisible meanings, — men like the famous French philosopher who discovered extraordinary beauty in certain profundities of Pascal, which turned out to be simple errors of a copyist.

This inferior kind of obscurity, like most things of a secondary rank, is open to cultivation, although the

greater number of those who profit by such husbandry are slow to acknowledge the obligation. A bright exception is found in Thoreau. He was one who believed in telling the truth. 'I do not suppose that I have attained to obscurity,' he writes. But he was too modest by half. He did attain to it, and in both kinds: sometimes in willful paradox and exaggeration, a sort of 'Come, now, good reader, no falling asleep!' and sometimes, but less often, — for such visitations are rare with the best of men, — in some quick, unstudied phrase that opens, as it were, an unsuspected door within us, and makes us forget for the time being the author and his book.

Perhaps it would be true to say that when men are most inspired their speech becomes most like Nature's own, — inarticulate, and so capable of expressing things inexpressible. What book, what line of verse, ever evoked those unutterable feelings — feelings beyond even the *thought* of utterance — that are awakened in us now and then, in divinely favorable moments, by the plash of waters or the sighing of winds? When an author does aught of this kind for us, we must love and praise him, let his shortcomings be what they will. If a man is great enough in himself, or serviceable enough to us, we need not insist upon all the minor perfections.

For the rest, these things remain true: language is the work of the people, and belongs to the people, however lexicographers and grammarians may codify, and possibly, in rare instances, improve it. Commonplaces are the staple of literature. The great books appeal to men as men, not as scholars. A fog is not a cloud, though a man with his feet in the mud may hug himself and say, 'Look, how I soar!' Preciosity

is good for those that like it; they have their reward; but to set up a conventicle, with passwords and a private creed, is not to found a religion. In the long run, nothing is supremely beautiful but genuine simplicity, which may be a perfection of nature or the perfection of art; and the only obscurity that suits with it and sets it off is occasional, unexpected, momentary, — a sudden excess of light that flashes and is gone, surprising the writer first, and afterward the reader.

A SPEED LIMIT FOR LOVE

I OFTEN wonder what the loving parents of our land would do in the way of lamentation if facts could be adduced in their own families to prove the reasonableness of fiction. In modern magazine literature the short-story form, which was never intended to trace the rough and tortuous course of love, is consecrated wholly to that difficult service. The result is — if I may refer without malice to the plots of a few late stories — that all our love-making arises suddenly out of nowhere, and runs to its consummation at marvelous speed. A lady of family, and presumably of sense, is stranded in mid-desert by her extinct automobile. Whereupon (the author allows himself one brave touch of naturalism) she sits down to weep. The form of a solitary man appears out of the waste. They walk together toward the settlements for the matter of two days, saying little, but thinking much, — though we are not let into the matter of their thought, — as subsequent events go to prove. Arrived within sight of habitation, the rescuer submits to the fate reserved for all heroes in fiction, and makes the inevitable proposal.

She accedes with an alacrity that would be expressed outside a sentimental piece only by the boys' exclamation, 'You bet!'

The movement of the story ends here, and with it our intoxication. Reason begins to clamor. And so we are told in a final sentence that the man is not a tramp of the desert, but, like the woman he has won, the flower of fashion, and the pole of an enormous system of wealth.

In short, fiction would have us believe not only that love springs into full bloom at first sight, but that marriage usually follows before dew-fall. And since our heroes and heroines are always men and women of quality, — wealthy, cultured, self-possessed, — the dangerous and unseemly haste represented by their actions must be the prevalent style of courtship in the very best circles of our society. How, then, oh how, must it be with the chambermaid and the serving-man? Biddy, the cook, is precipitately wooed, won, and married, all in the course of a minute! Were I a father, and thought such things could be, and if my children had only a modest endowment of discretion, I know I should keep them under surveillance day and night; and like Tristram Shandy's father, pass my natural lifetime composing a system of education for them.

The trouble begins, as I said, with the misuse of the short-story form. It reminds me of the mediæval painting, which knew not the use of perspective, and so represented a scene that in nature would occupy three dimensions, by images which, frown and squint as you will, can be seen only as in two. Now love, as I understand it (though I confess it is one poor weak intelligence against the many), is a thing of three dimensions, and a fourth, and many others subtly felt,

and needing to be subtly indicated by the artist. Instead of being rendered flat, in a panel, it should be let loose in space and be bathed round with air, — to use the painter's terms, — or, in terms of narrative, be subject to the free circulation of time. The art does, indeed, provide a simple medium for this in the introductory paragraph, which aims to include what is there at the beginning of the story. But readers are impatient of these delays and require that they be held down to a minimum. In consequence, the product is an enormity from the standpoint of truth, but a grand success judged from its result, — excitement. Like mediæval saints, we gaze and adore, our imagination supplying all that lacks. And so we shall, I suppose, until the coming of the new renaissance, when old things shall pass away, and the short story shall be reformed.

It occurs to me that life must be a sad and dismal discipline alike for the writers who create this kind of love-affair, and for the folk who take their ideas of the tender passion from such masters. I myself confess to a feeling of tedium in the perusal of a three-volume novel. But I would willingly resort to one for the treat of a good old-fashioned courtship as they are said actually to have occurred when our grandmothers were of marriageable age; and as they did — if personal bias must come out at last — when I went a-sparkin'. Then John would 'drop in' from the neighboring farm and sit with the family on the front porch, talking of crops and markets, births, deaths, and marriages, until a late bedtime, although the new polish on his boots made all disguise of no avail, and proclaimed that he had come for a very different purpose.

At last all would retire but Katie. And then John's boots, that had erst been tucked somewhat awkwardly beneath his chair, would produce themselves, dramatically, and begin to flash in the moonlight. They two would then withdraw to the front gate, so convenient to lean upon, or to the kitchen; and what they said only the moon heard, or the cat, yawning beneath the stove.

Perhaps they were so dull in the business that what they said was not worth hearing — nothing at all to the point. Indeed, it would seem so, for the same performance, so far as we can follow it (to the *coup d'amour*, when the boots began to flash, and they sauntered toward the gate), was repeated night after night for a year; until, sometimes, only the advances of a rival would occasion a perceptible change in their relations, and bring behind it the long-expected announcement. Be it so. They had the ampler opportunity to think. At all events, we may be sure they did nothing hasty and rash. And if the modern lover who, according to the stories, finishes the whole experience in a day, is still unable to see the advantage of this protraction, let him recall the thoughts of his one day, and reflect how it would be to enjoy such thoughts for a year!

I think I should protest with the loudest against old-fogyism. But if our short-story literature of love is a true transcription of the love of real life, then I am happy to be ranked among the ancients, knowing that my superannuation insures me against this dreadful kind of mortality — the crowding of years into a day, and of all the joys we have worth remembering into an hour.

THE SCIENCE OF NAMES

WRITERS spend much time and thought in selecting a name for a play or novel, for they know that success is largely dependent on it. Parents, however, are strangely careless and unscientific in giving names to children. In the Harvard and Yale catalogues of last year I find but two or three really good combinations. Usually, when a new-comer arrives, some old family name is taken; or if the parents exercise an original choice, they are too much excited to be guided by any sound euphonic principles. They forget that not only from the social point of view it is very advantageous to have one's name remembered, but that from the business point of view notoriety is capital, and must be obtained by persistent and ingenious advertising. But if a certain amount of notoriety could be obtained for John Smith by an expenditure of time, money, and ingenuity represented by x, and spread over a period of three years, it is safe to say that the same amount could be obtained for Hans Arrowsmith by $\frac{x}{4}$ in eighteen months. Nor is the saving of time and money on the part of the knocker at the gate of notoriety the only thing to be considered, for, from the altruistic point of view, the lessening of the effort of recollection on the part of the world is far more important. The economy of the public stock of energy wasted in innumerable unconscious efforts to remember a name without any corners for the memory to grasp, but persistently thrust before it, would result in an increase of available mental force applicable to settling the question of future probation, or to raising the ethical standard, or to reforming the tariff,

or to disposing of the surplus. The importance of the subject leads me to suggest one or two of the chief fundamental principles of the science of naming children. The system is simple, and any provident parent can easily master and apply it.

(1) Avoid odd, or eccentric, or poetic combinations, and be guided by euphonic quality only. It is true that an odd name may be remembered, but the associations with it will not be pleasing. The idea of oddity or affectation may attach to the shadowy personality built up in the mind of the public. Under this rule, hyphenated names, especially hyphenated Christian names, like Floyd-Jones Robinson, are to be avoided. Writing the first given name with an initial and the second in full is also evidently opposed to correct scientific principles.

(2) The best form of name is a dactyl and a spondee, like 'Jeremy Taylor.' Every one has heard of the 'Shakespeare of divines,' and has a dim idea of an agreeable personality attached to the name. Had his name been Charles Taylor, it is far within bounds to say that his reputation would be about one third of what it is now.

(3) If the surname is not one that can be treated according to the above rule, it should be fitted with a given name, such as to bring the combination as nearly as possible to the above length and cadence, as, Sidney Dobell, Ellery Vane, Henry Ward Beecher, Dante Rossetti, Theodore Watts, and the like; or, otherwise, to two long syllables, like Mark Twain or Bret Harte. The sub-divisions of this branch of the subject are too numerous to be given, but all rest on principle No. 2. The phonic value of the surname is, under our custom, the controlling element in practically applying the science of names.

The great value of names beginning with Mac or O is evident, because they so readily combine with the ordinary Christian names. Any one would be favorably disposed to Arthur O'Connor, for instance. A boy pervades our quiet neighborhood simply because his name is Johnny MacWhorter. He is not in any respect a remarkable boy, but his name forces him into prominence by its phonic value. There are some ten or twelve boys who are comrades, but he and another dactyl-spondee boy, Emory Watson, are the only ones ever spoken of. No doubt there are others who do as much mischief and make more noise, but these two *reap all the fame.*

The nicknames given by children and baseball players will be found to conform pretty closely to the true principles of the art.

I have formed names for my three boys in accordance with these rules, which will give the youngsters — if they ever appear — a start in life equivalent to a cash capital of at least fifteen thousand dollars. As their appellations will probably constitute their entire patrimony, I cannot be expected to mention them until they are securely attached to the inchoate personalities. I have indicated the outlines of the method, so that any young parent can, with a little thought, construct as many names as he is likely to need.

SLEEP

WHEN all is written, how little we know of sleep! It is a closing of the eyes, a disappearance, a wondering return. In uneasy slumber, in dreamless, dead rest, in horrid nightmare, or in ecstasies of somnolent fancies, the eyes are blinded, the body abandoned,

while the inner essence is we know not where. We have no other knowledge of sleep than we have of death. In delirium or coma or trance, no less than in normal sleep and in dissolution, the soul is gone. In these it returns, in that it does not come again, or so we ignorantly think.

Yet when I reflect on my death I forget that I have encountered it many times already, and find myself none the worse. I forget that I sleep. The fly has no shorter an existence than man's. We bustle about for a few years with ludicrous importance, as bottle-flies buzz at the window-panes. They too may imagine themselves of infinite moment in this universe we share with them. But this is to take no account of the prognostics of sleep. There is something hidden, something secret, some unfathomed mystery whose presence we feel but cannot verify, some permeative thought insistently moving in our hearts, some phosphorescence that glows we know not whence through our shadowy atoms.

Sleep itself, nor half its promises nor mysteries, has been plumbed. It is the mother of superstitions and of miracles. In dreams we may search the surface powers of the freed soul. Visions in the night are not all hallucinations, voices in the night are not all mocking. There is a prophet dwells within the mind, not of the mind, but deeper throned in obscurity. The brain cannot know of this holy presence or of its life in sleep. The brain is mortal and untrustworthy, a phonograph and a camera for audible and palpable existence. Strike it a blow in childhood so that it ceases its labor, and awake it by surgery after forty years, and it will repeat the infantile action or word it last recorded, and will take up its task on the in-

stant, making no account of the intermediate years. They are non-existent to it. Yet to that hidden Memory those diseased years are not blank; it knows, it has recorded, though the brain has slept. And in hypnotic or psychic trance, when that wonderful Ruler is released from the prison of the body, it can speak through the atom-blent machinery of the flesh, and tell of things man himself could not know because of his paralyzed brain. This Ruler is not asleep in sleep, nor in delirium is it delirious; and in death, is it dead? Through all the ages it has been our Sphinx which we have interrogated in vain. It joins not in our laughter or our tears. We have fancied it with immobile, brooding features of utmost knowledge and wisdom and sorrow. It has asked us but one question, nor from the day of Œdipus unto to-day have we answered rightly, so that we die of our ignorance. It is Osiris living in us. It is the Unknown God to whom we erect our altars; the Fire in the Tabernacle; the Presence behind the veil. Not in normal wakefulness, at least, will it answer our queries; but in sleep sometimes it will speak. And it may possibly be that at last, after all these centuries, we are learning how to question it, and in hypnotic trance and in the fearful law of suggestion, are discovering somewhat of its mystery, and how to employ it for our worldly good. Yet to its essential secret we are no closer than our forefathers were.

We may define dreams and nightmare, coma and swoon and trance, with what terms we will; search their physical reasons, and learn to guide and guard; yet we know no more of them than of electricity. We may begin to suspect that telepathy and clairvoyance and occult forces of the soul are not superstitious

fancies; and we may even empirically classify and study and direct them. Yet the soul itself is no nearer our inquisition; and the more we learn of its power the more doubtful we grow of its existence.

Though we should know of its reality, though our finite minds should fathom the infinitude, of what benefit would it be? Would it modify our beliefs or our hopes or our faiths? Would it dictate one action to our passionate lives? There would be no change in human nature and no reforms of the world. We are the children of our fathers, and our children will tread the prehistoric paths. Dreams are our life, whether we wake or sleep. We drowse through existence, awaking and dying and being reborn daily, ever torpescent and unamazed, and our thousand slumberous deaths we call restorative sleep; sleep, that restores our physical being, building up where we have torn down, recreating what we have destroyed.

Black — pitch black, indeed — is the cavern of Morpheus. Faith peoples it with varied legions, and builds its chaos into myriad forms. Nightly we enter it and drain the Lethean air and forget, and daily we return with rejoicings, babbling of dreams that were not dreamed; and finally we enter for the last time, and drain somewhat more deeply the essence of ecstasy, and awake no more, and no more return to the autumn-dyed skies of the dawn. And yet we shall dream.

NOTES

THE notes that are given in this section are for the most part very general. Usually they consist of brief comments on the merits of certain essays and suggestions of comparisons and contrasts between essays. Sometimes additional reading is recommended. The student is encouraged to make use of the questions contained in the latter part of the introduction and to depend on himself in looking up the references and various allusions.

TYPE I

TYMPANO (p. 6)

This essay is an admirable illustration of the subtle adaptation of sentence structure to the thought expressed and to the mood of the writer. Does it appear to be a conscious or studied adaptation? Notice the frequent crescendo effects obtained through sentence structure and the use of well-chosen onomatopoetic words. Historical, musical, and literary allusions have been used naturally and unobtrusively.

THE DAILY THEME EYE (p. 21)

Read this essay carefully and compare the writer's experience in theme-writing with your own. Do you possess the theme eye here described? The essence of true essay-writing lies, according to Walter Pater, 'in the dextrous availing oneself of accident and circumstance, in the prosecution of deeper lines of observation.' Try to discover your method of essay-writing.

THE SATURDAY-NIGHT BATH (p. 31)

Notice the beginning of this essay. What proportion of the essay is narrative? To what extent is it expository?

NIGHT (p. 58)

Analyze the style of this essay carefully. Read De Quincey's 'Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow' and Stevenson's sketch, 'A Night among the Pines,' from *Travels with a Donkey*. Do you discover in the present essay any similarity to the style and the personal attitude of these authors?

ENDICOTT AND I CONDUCT AN ORCHESTRA (p. 62)

Is the proportion of narration in this essay as great as in 'The Saturday Night Bath'? What is there in the personality of the writers of these two selections that adds charm to their respective essays?

TYPE II

STRAINING AT THE TETHER (p. 83)

Compare the thought here expressed with that of Stevenson's essay, 'El Dorado,' in *Virginibus Puerisque*. See William Vaughn Moody's 'Road-Hymn for the Start' for the quotation at the end of this essay.

ON THE ROOF (p. 91)

Study this essay for the influence that the personality and the style of the author have in making the subject-matter interesting.

RETURNING (p. 102)

Study the structure of this selection. The central idea, or thesis, is first stated abstractly; then follows the exposition by means of concrete illustrations. Notice the paragraphing.

AN' HIM WENT HOME TO HIM'S MUVVER (p. 127)

Compare this with 'Returning.' Does the incident recorded in the first part or the writer's personal interpretation constitute the principal charm? Has the essayist treated the text too seriously?

THE PASSING OF EMILY RUGGLES'S (p. 136)

Was Emily Ruggles portrayed from life, or is it possible that she was suggested to the writer by Hepzibah Pyncheon in Hawthorne's *The House of Seven Gables?* What two threads of human interest are united in this essay?

TYPE III

TRAVELING ON THE BRANCH (p. 152)

Read this essay aloud. Notice, in addition to the easy, natural attitude of the writer, the familiar, conversational style.

FIRE WORSHIP (p. 166)

The reading of Æschylus's *Prometheus Bound* or William Vaughn Moody's poetic drama, *The Fire-Bringer*, will enhance the reader's enjoyment of this essay.

'LITTLE THINGS' (p. 174)

This is a good example of the effective use of contrast in developing the main point of the essay. Notice the epigrammatic quality of style in the latter half of the essay.

THE LEFT-OVER EXPRESSION OF COUNTENANCE (p. 177)

Test your own ability to make subtle observations similar to those that the author of this essay has made.

THE ROUND WORLD (p. 187)

Compare this with 'Beneficent Effects of the Earth's Sphericity.' Which do you prefer? What differences do you discover in subject-matter, treatment, and style?

AMENITIES OF STREET-CAR TRAVEL (p. 190)

Read Stevenson's essay, 'On the Enjoyment of Unpleasant Places.'

TYPE IV

BUTTERFLY PSYCHOLOGY (p. 203)

This is an excellent selection for the study of the essayist's poetic conception of the subject, his meditative mood, and his literary style. Read Burroughs's 'An Idyl of the Honey-Bee' and M. Maeterlinck's *The Life of the Bee.*

WOODLAND MYSTERIES (p. 208)

Study the use of literary and mythological allusions. Read several of the nature essays of such writers as John Burroughs, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and Richard Jefferies.

JONAS AND MATILDA (p. 212)

Compare this with 'The Saturday Night Bath' and 'Endicott and I Conduct an Orchestra.' What similarity do you discover? What qualities constitute the principal charm of this essay?

HUMAN NATURE IN CHICKENS (p. 222)

The reading of Chaucer's 'The Nun's Priest's Tale' and Rostand's drama, *Chantecler*, will increase the reader's appreciation of this brief essay.

DOGS (p. 224)

Readers who enjoy this sympathetic little sketch will also enjoy such essays as Stevenson's 'The Character of Dogs' and M. Maeterlinck's essay on dogs. All lovers of dogs should read such dog stories as Dr. John Brown's *Rab and His Friends*, Jack London's *Call of the Wild*, Alfred Ollivant's *Bob, Son of Battle*, John Muir's *Stickeen*, and Richard Harding Davis's *The Bar Sinister.*

A HUNTER OF THE GRASS-TOPS (p. 231)

Compare the beginning of this essay with that of 'Butterfly Psychology' and 'Straining at the Tether.' Read Dallas

Lore Sharp's 'Turtle Eggs for Agassiz,' in *Atlantic Classics* or in Mr. Sharp's collection of his essays entitled *The Face of the Fields*, and compare the attitude of the two essayists toward their respective subjects. What is the secret of the reader's enjoyment of the present essay?

GOSSAMER (p. 235)

Compare this with 'Butterfly Psychology' for poetic conception and literary style and tone. Refer to the fairy scenes in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Study the sentence structure of this selection.

THE ROCK AND THE POOL (p. 239)

This essay may be called a delicate prose fantasy. Is the style intimate and personal?

TYPE V

WIT AND HUMOUR (p. 254)

This essay contains a thoughtful, pleasing analysis of wit and humor by means of comparison and contrast. What two attitudes of mind may be indicated by the writer's sentence, 'Rightly considered, the whole universe is a joke on mankind'?

BEHIND THE EYE (p. 263)

Compare the thought expressed with that in 'The Monotony of Our Minds.'

THE GRACE OF OBSCURITY (p. 279)

Is obscurity in literature, music, or the other arts a virtue and pleasing quality? Would you make a distinction between obscurity and suggestiveness in literature? In your reading of Bacon's and Emerson's essays, the novels of Henry James and of George Meredith, and the poetry of Browning, do you find a considerable amount of obscurity?

A SPEED LIMIT FOR LOVE (p. 284)

Have you read any short story dealing with the love theme which you consider an exception to the essayist's observations herein stated? Read J. M. Barrie's 'The Courting of T'nowhead's Bell' and 'Two of Them,' and H. C. Bunner's 'A Sisterly Scheme.' Are these exceptions to his statement?

THE SCIENCE OF NAMES (p. 288)

Does the last paragraph remind you of Lamb's quaint prose reverie, 'Dream-Children'?

APPENDIX

A LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR FAMILIAR ESSAYS

In no other form of prose composition is the selection of a subject so much a matter of the writer's own choosing as in the familiar essay. Though adequate subjects can rarely be assigned by another person, it is possible that the student may find in the following list a few titles that suggest subjects of interest to him and within the range of his observation and experience.

1. On Discovering Oneself.
2. On Deceiving Oneself.
3. Epidemic Education.
4. The Pleasures of Loafing.
5. Favorite Antipathies.
6. On Wearing New Shoes.
7. The Penalty of Violating Convention.
8. First Impressions.
9. On Acquiring an Artistic Temperament.
10. A Model Obituary.
11. Uses of Disagreeable People.
12. Keeping up Appearances.
13. The Psychology of Bargains.
14. People Who Make-Believe.
15. Conceited People.
16. Our Nervous Age.
17. Sophomore Apathy.
18. The Enchantment of Distance.
19. On Being Worth Knowing.
20. The Glory of the Commonplace.
21. Mental Laziness.
22. On Thinking for Oneself.
23. The Necessity of Being Amused.
24. Man's Opinion of Himself.

25. On Giving Advice.
26. Silent Talkers.
27. My Ailments.
28. The Valor of Ignorance.
29. An Apology for Bores.
30. College Libraries as Social Centres.
31. Judging by Appearances.
32. On Making Excuses.
33. The Pleasure of Escape.
34. A Word for Mediocrity.
35. On Attending to Other People's Business.
36. The Heritage of the Youngest Child.
37. Academic Snobbishness.
38. On Being Small.
39. A Defense of Day-Dreaming.
40. Leaders and Led.
41. The Excitement of Having a Bank Account.
42. By-Products of Church Attendance.
43. Fashionable Tardiness.
44. The Penalties of Success.
45. On Looking One's Best.
46. Cultural Immunity.
47. Personality in Apparel.
48. The Responsibility of Greatness.
49. On Recovering from Love Affairs.
50. The Passing of the Country Road.
51. Mute Eloquence.
52. On Choosing One's Ancestors.
53. The Psychology of Patent Medicines.
54. Helpful Enemies.
55. The Tyranny of Trifles.
56. Intellectual Alarm Clocks.
57. The Monotony of Student Life.
58. Table Manners.
59. On Holding One's Tongue.
60. Dangers of Narrowmindedness.
61. The Tendency to Exaggerate Misfortune.
62. Outgrown Opinions.
63. On Making Apologies for Oneself.
64. My Taskmaster — Duty.
65. Talkers.

66. The Character of Horses.
67. Why the Dessert Course Last?
68. On Being Introduced.
69. Running on Low Gear.
70. Etiquette for Ancestors.
71. On Going Barefooted.
72. Cast-off Enthusiams.
73. The Joys of the Country Cottager.
74. On Answering Advertisements.
75. Reflections While Shaving.
76. Shams.
77. Intellectual Inheritances.
78. The Imperious 'They.'
79. On Knowing When to Stop.
80. Personality in the Handshake.
81. Hairpins.
82. On Taking Oneself Too Seriously.
83. A Curse of Cleverness.
84. Living Caricatures.
85. On Repenting at Leisure.
86. Imitations.
87. The Joys of Procrastination.
88. Popular Fallacies.
89. 'Men Say.'
90. Human Parasites.
91. On Looking Wise.
92. Mechanical Pleasures.
93. Sponges.
94. On Waiting for the Postman.
95. Intellectual Pioneers.
96. Animal Resemblances in People.
97. The Pleasures of Quarreling.
98. Bird Music.
99. Victims of Charity.
100. On Being Misunderstood.
101. Some False Impressions of Childhood.
102. Rivalry in Gift-Giving.
103. Faces and Masks.
104. On Posing for My Friends.
105. Seasonal Joys.
106. The Value of Disagreement.

107. The Pleasures of Living.
108. Garden Friends.
109. Animal Facial Expressions.
110. Automobile Society.
111. On Outgrowing One's Family.
112. The Abuse of the Imagination.
113. Humorous Blunders.
114. Getters and Receivers.
115. On Praying in Public.
116. Pleasures of Memory.
117. My Selves.
118. A Plea for Ghosts.
119. On Keeping a Secret.
120. Color Antipathies.
121. The Art of Eating Spaghetti.
122. Pins or Angels?
123. On Going to Sleep.
124. Human Blindness.
125. Dream Adventures.
126. Behind the Teeth.
127. On Riding Pegasus with Spurs.
128. Butterfly Fancies.
129. 'Present.'
130. The Glamour of the Past.
131. Chameleons.
132. On Being Good Company for Oneself.
133. Face Value.
134. The Monotony of Being Good.
135. Safety Valves in Student Life.
136. On Being Mentally Alert.
137. Company Manners.
138. Nature's Spring Song.
139. Mountains and Molehills.
140. Old-fashioned Remedies.
141. On Wearing Overshoes.
142. The Influence of Proximity.
143. Bristles.
144. Working Over-Time.
145. On Nursing a Grievance.
146. Family Expectations.
147. Mental Perspective.

148. Subway Scenery.
149. The Futility of the Practical.
150. On Making Up One's Mind.
151. The Responsibility of a 'Perfect' Baby.
152. Domineering Ideals.
153. On Living in the Present (Future).
154. Social Misfits.
155. Interesting By-Paths.
156. Temporal Halos.
157. Face Forward!
158. Mental Vagrancy.
159. On Hugging a Conclusion.
160. An Apology for Polite Lying.
161. Preparedness.
162. Gasoline and Onions.
163. On Stepping Aside.
164. Voices.
165. Late Arrivals.
166. 'Next!'
167. Mental Détours.
168. Watch Your Step!
169. On Telling Jokes.
170. Epitaph Humor.
171. The Winged Circle.
172. Spring Styles in Freshmen.
173. American Aggressiveness.
174. Nature's Languages.
175. Earthbound.
176. On Advising the Almighty.
177. Mental Lapses.
178. Fashion Bondage.
179. Haunted Libraries.
180. The Humor of Cartoons.
181. Wasting Time.
182. On Growing Up.
183. Beyond My Horizon.
184. Mental Shock-Absorbers.
185. After He Was Dead.
186. Successful Failures.
187. The Dilettante.
188. Humorous Dyspepsia.

189. On Becoming One's Own Financier.
190. Conservation of Social Resources.
191. Perfume and the Lady.
192. On Being Eye-Minded.
193. The Satisfaction of Being Well-Dressed.
194. Earth Odors.
195. The Life Urge in Nature.
196. The Shrinking Earth.
197. College Ethics.
198. The Triumph of the Machine.
199. Human Gadflies.
200. The Failure of Success.
201. Social Eclipses.
202. Adventures While Pursuing an Idea.
203. Our Ragtime Age.
204. On Boasting of Weakness.
205. Discords.
206. Suspended Judgments.
207. Second Thoughts.
208. On Keeping Step.
209. Understudies.
210. The Vogue of Boredom.
211. Smoke Wreaths.
212. Traveling and Arriving.
213. Echoes.
214. Screens, Past and Present.
215. Illusions We Live By.
216. On Losing One's Grip.
217. Poppies.
218. Anvil Choruses.
219. Interesting Pathetic Fallacies.
220. Evidences of Humor and Joy in Animals.
221. On Card-Indexing One's Friends.
222. Gigglers and Growlers.
223. Too Much Momentum.
224. Mental Indigestion.
225. Diddling.
226. Female Orators.
227. Laughter as a Social Asset.
228. Personal Reactions.
229. Grooves and Graves.

230. On Taking Thought for the World.
231. Blind Optimism.
232. Church Theatricals.
233. The Skimmed Milk of Human Kindness.
234. On Asking Why.
235. Canine Expressions.
236. On Seeing One's Name in Print.
237. Backyard Gardens.
238. Curiosity in Chickens.
239. The Passing of Modesty.
240. On Going to War.
241. Telephone Manners.
242. Nodding.
243. Social Protective Coloring.
244. On Arising to the Occasion.
245. Human Registers.
246. The Responsibility of Being Sane.
247. Acid Tests.
248. The Pleasures of Eating.
249. On Losing One's Freckles.
250. Mental Precipitates.

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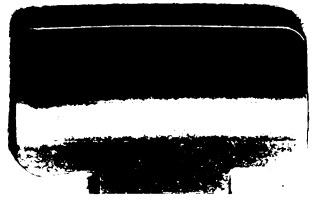
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